

PALGRAVE'S

GOLDEN TREASURY

WALTER BARNES



Class PH 175

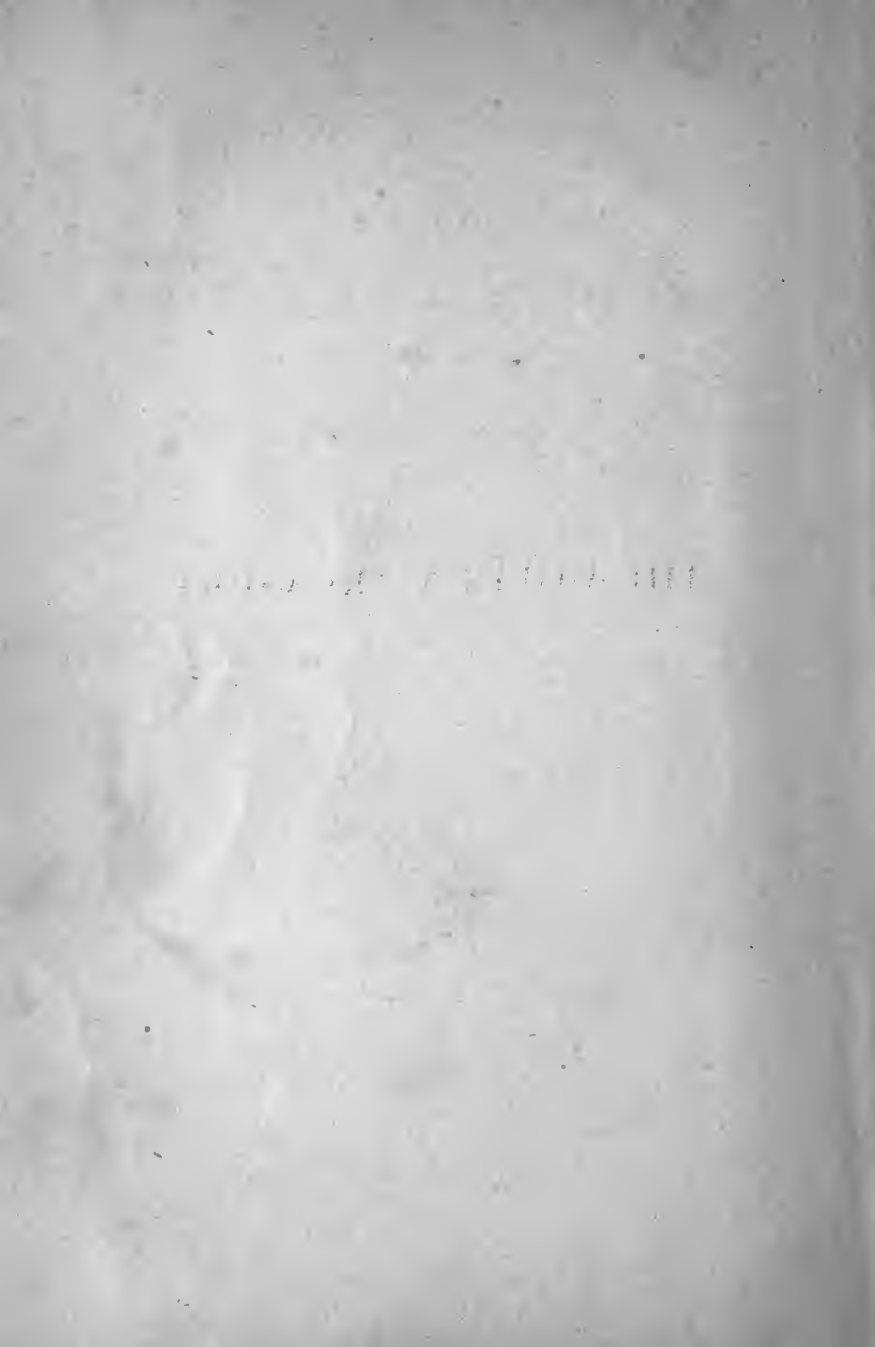
Book 193

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THE GOLDEN TREASURY



Palgrave, Francis Turner
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THE
GOLDEN TREASURY

EDITED WITH NOTES

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PALGRAVE'S PREFACE

This little Collection differs, it is believed, from others in the attempt made to include in it all the best original Lyrical pieces and Songs in our language (save a very few regretfully omitted on account of length), by writers not living,—and none beside the best. Many familiar verses will hence be met with; many also which should be familiar:—the Editor will regard as his fittest readers those who love Poetry so well, that he can offer them nothing not already known and valued.

The Editor is acquainted with no strict and exhaustive definition of Lyrical Poetry; but he has found the task of practical decision increase in clearness and in facility as he advanced with the work, whilst keeping in view a few simple principles. Lyrical has been here held essentially to imply that each Poem shall turn on some single thought, feeling, or situation. In accordance with this, narrative, descriptive, and didactic poems—unless accompanied by rapidity of movement, brevity, and the colouring of human passion,—have been excluded. Humourous poetry, except in the very unfrequent instances where a truly poetical tone pervades the whole, with what is strictly personal, occasional, and religious, has been considered foreign to the idea of the book. Blank verse and the ten-syllable couplet, with all pieces markedly dramatic, have been rejected as alien from what is commonly understood by Song, and rarely conforming to Lyrical conditions in treatment. But it is not anticipated, nor is it possible, that all readers shall think the line accurately drawn. Some poems, as Gray's

Elegy, the *Allegro* and *Penseroso*, Wordsworth's *Ruth* or Campbell's *Lord Ullin*, might be claimed with perhaps equal justice for a narrative or descriptive selection: whilst with reference especially to Ballads and Sonnets, the Editor can only state that he has taken his utmost pains to decide without caprice or partiality.

This also is all he can plead in regard to a point even more liable to question;—what degree of merit should give rank among the Best. That a poem shall be worthy of the writer's genius,—that it shall reach a perfection commensurate with its aim,—that we should require finish in proportion to brevity,—that passion, colour, and originality cannot atone for serious imperfections in clearness, unity or truth,—that a few good lines do not make a good poem, that popular estimate is serviceable as a guidepost more than as a compass,—above all, that excellence should be looked for rather in the whole than in the parts,—such and other such canons have been always steadily regarded. He may however add that the pieces chosen, and a far larger number rejected, have been carefully and repeatedly considered; and that he has been aided throughout by two friends of independent and exercised judgment, besides the distinguished person addressed in the Dedication. It is hoped that by this procedure the volume has been freed from that one-sidedness which must beset individual decisions:—but for the final choice the Editor is alone responsible.

Chalmer's vast collection, with the whole works of all accessible poets not contained in it, and the best Anthologies of different periods, have been twice systematically read through: and it is hence improbable that any omissions which may be regretted are due to oversight. The poems are printed entire, except in a very few instances where a stanza or passage has been omitted. These omis-

sions have been risked only when the piece could be thus brought to a closer lyrical unity: and, as essentially opposed to this unity, extracts, obviously such, are excluded. In regard to the text, the purpose of the book has appeared to justify the choice of the most poetical version, wherever more than one exists; and much labour has been given to present each poem, in disposition, spelling, and punctuation, to the greatest advantage.

In the arrangement, the most poetically-effective order has been attempted. The English mind has passed through phases of thought and cultivation so various and so opposed during these three centuries of Poetry, that a rapid passage between old and new, like rapid alteration, of the eye's focus in looking at the landscape, will always be wearisome and hurtful to the sense of Beauty. The poems have been therefore distributed into Books corresponding, I to the ninety years closing about 1616, II thence to 1700, III to 1800, IV to the half century just ended. Or, looking at the Poets who more or less give each portion its distinctive character, they might be called the Books of Shakespèare, Milton, Gray, and Wordsworth. The volume, in this respect, so far as the limitations of its range allow, accurately reflects the natural growth and evolution of our Poetry. A rigidly chronological sequence, however, rather fits a collection aiming at instruction than at pleasure, and the wisdom which comes through pleasure:—within each book the pieces have therefore been arranged in gradations of feeling or subject. And it is hoped that the contents of this Anthology will thus be found to present a certain unity, “as episodes,” in the noble language of Shelley, “to that great Poem which all poets, like the co-operating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world.”

As he closes his long survey, the Editor trusts he may add without egotism, that he has found the vague general verdict of popular Fame more just than those have thought, who, with too severe a criticism, would confine judgments on Poetry to "the selected few of many generations." Not many appear to have gained reputation without some gift or performance that, in due degree, deserved it: and if no verses by certain writers who show less strength than sweetness, or more thought than mastery of expression, are printed in this volume, it should not be imagined that they have been excluded without much hesitation and regret,—far less that they have been slighted. Throughout this vast and pathetic array of Singers now silent, few have been honoured with the name Poet, and have not possessed a skill in words, a sympathy with beauty, a tenderness of feeling, or seriousness in reflection, which render their works, although never perhaps attaining that loftier and finer excellence here required,—better worth reading than much of what fills the scanty hours that most men spare for self-improvement, or for pleasure in any of its more elevated and permanent forms.—And if this be true of even mediocre poetry, for how much more are we indebted to the best! Like the fabled fountain of the Azores, but with a more various power, the magic of this Art can confer on each period of life its appropriate blessing: on early years Experience, on maturity Calm, on age, Youthfulness. Poetry gives treasures "more golden than gold," leading us in higher and healthier ways than those of the world, and interpreting to us the lessons of Nature. But she speaks best for herself. Her true accents, if the plan has been executed with success, may be heard throughout the following pages:—wherever the Poets of England are honoured, wherever the dominant

language of the world is spoken, it is hoped that they will find fit audience.

1861

Some poems, especially in Book I, have been added:—either on better acquaintance;—in deference to critical suggestions;—or unknown to the Editor when first gathering his harvest. For aid in these after-gleanings he is specially indebted to the excellent reprints of rare early verse given us by Dr. Hannah, Dr. Grosart, Mr. Arber, Mr. Bullen, and others,—and (in regard to the additions of 1883) to the advice of that distinguished Friend, by whom the final choice has been so largely guided. The text has also been carefully revised from authoritative sources. It has still seemed best, for many reasons, to retain the original limit by which the selection was confined to those then no longer living. But the editor hopes that, so far as in him lies, a complete and definitive collection of our best Lyrics, to the central year of this fast-closing century, is now offered.

1883-1890-1891

INTRODUCTION TO THIS EDITION

This edition of "The Golden Treasury" differs, I believe, from other editions in that the notes are literary rather than linguistic. I have shaped all my annotations to four ends: to bring out the literary qualities of the poems; to discuss the metre; to introduce any material that might aid in the interpretation, as, for example, the circumstances under which some of the lyrics in Shakespeare's plays were originally sung; and to give suggestions about the oral reading. I have endeavored, in a word, to assist students in the appreciation of the poems.

Such an edition is assuredly new. But is it desirable? I believe it is. It is because I felt the need of such an edition in my own work that my thoughts were first directed to the subject. I do not question, of course, that many a teacher will teach the poems better with an un-annotated edition than many another teacher will with notes—notes like these or any other notes. Such a teacher will find this edition valuable only in saving time for him and his students and in giving him a chance hint here and there. But surely there are many teachers that will be glad to receive suggestions as to the literary qualities of the poems and the methods of approach to them.

Certain it is that many of us do not know how to teach poetry. Many of us emphasize the linguistic, the formal, and the intellectual phases, and ignore that for which poetry exists: the expression and the communication of emotion. I know that some teachers of English believe that the emotional cannot be taught except through the

intellectual, that a poem must be zealously studied before it can be enjoyed. Of course, it is true that many poems cannot be enjoyed until certain intellectual problems have been solved, and it is equally true that the intellectual and the emotional go hand in hand. But the trouble has been that most of us content ourselves with the intellectual elements, taking it for granted that the student will feel the emotion of himself or that he would not feel it whatever we might do to assist him. I do not believe that. I believe that the student can be very materially assisted if the teacher will lay emphasis upon the literary interpretation, upon the emotional phases of the poetry. It is in that belief that this edition has been prepared. I have tried to steer between the matter-of-fact, unemotional dissection of the poems, which will not arouse students, and the ecstatic admiration, which will arouse merely their antagonism; but Scylla and Charybdis are so perilously close to each other that I do not pretend I have not, at times, approached each of them.

Believing that there is no use in telling a student flatly that he must appreciate a poem, when perhaps he does not know and cannot discover what is the meaning of it or of some part of it, I have tried, in making my annotations, to remove all the mental obstacles before approaching the emotional elements or the oral reading. I have included a good many textual glosses, though I set out with the intention of giving few. I have found, on the whole, that it is not the obsolete word that presents the greatest difficulty, but the word which, in the particular passage, has an unusual meaning. If a student does not know *any* meaning for a word, he will consult a dictionary—perhaps; but if he knows *a* meaning, he may conclude that it fits the particular case, and so wrest the entire passage from its proper meaning. Take

an illustration: Suppose that the student does not know that "stare", in the second stanza of No. 73, means "starling", but that he does know, as he certainly will, that there is a verb, "stare", meaning to "gaze at fixedly." The chances are that he will so interpret the word, connecting it with "sing" and "give" in the same stanza. Most of my notes on words and phrases are on those that might be misunderstood. I have made few glosses on mythological references.

A word as to the directions for oral reading. Most of us believe that poetry should be read aloud. But we permit our convictions to be set aside too easily—we have not time, or the students do not read well, or we ourselves do not read well. We need to believe that poetry is not poetry until it is read aloud, as music is not music until it is sung or played. I hold that it is an essential part of our work as teachers of poetry to train students in the art of reading aloud. For this reason I have given, directly or by implication, many suggestions for oral reading. I have tried not to be "elocutionary", and I have tried to base my suggestions on the obvious qualities of the poems under discussion.

There is one other unusual feature in the book. I have annotated all the poems in the first book, but I have left a good many for the student to work out in the second book, more in the third book, and very many in the fourth. The motive underlying this is, of course, the desire to give the student some ideals of criticism and some bases of appreciation, and to make him independent of text and teacher by putting him forward to do the work. I have tried to make him self-sufficient, within limits; and I have tried to make myself, by the time the student has done faithful work on the first part of the book, unnecessary.

Teachers will readily perceive that I have had space for but the notes. Even in these I have had to be so brief that I fear I am sometimes obscure, and I also have had to employ some technical terms without properly defining them. I have had no space to make cross-references, I have had no space to discuss the different lyric forms or the characteristics of the authors and the periods. I am sorry I could not touch upon all this, for I believe it is, though often overdone, an essential part of literary study. But the necessity of doing well the one thing I thought should be done prevented me from following up any of these interesting lines. I suggest that the teacher provide himself with "Notes on Palgrave's Golden Treasury," the Macmillan Co., New York, where he will find all this and much more.

I have changed the punctuation in many places—for the better, I hope. These alterations were made not so much to make the meaning different as to make it clear.

I have not had access to the definitive editions of some of the poems in "The Golden Treasury", so have had little opportunity to study variant readings intelligently. I have employed the reading that seemed the best. This is not good scholarship, certainly; but I have been the less unwilling to do this because I design the notes for students rather than for scholars, and I have yet to find a young student who is very much interested in pedantic quibbling—and scribbling—on minute points of scholarship.

My thanks are due Professor Bliss Perry of Harvard University, Professor Waitman Barbe of West Virginia University, and Mr. Charles Welsh of the World Book Company, for their sensible and sympathetic criticism of my manuscript.

W. B.

Fairmont, W. Va., Dec. 15, 1914.

THE GOLDEN TREASURY

BOOK ONE

1 SPRING

Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing:

“Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!”

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day.
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay:

“Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!”

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet:

“Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!”

Spring! the sweet Spring!

Thomas Nash

2 THE FAIRY LIFE

Where the bee sucks, there suck I;
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry;

On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

3 Come unto these yellow sands,
 And then take hands:
Courtsied when you have, and kiss'd
 The wild waves whist,
Foot it featly here and there
And, sweet Sprites, the burthen bear.
 Hark, hark!
 Bow-bow.
 The watch-dogs bark:
 Bow-wow.
 Hark, hark! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer
 Cry, Cock-a-diddle-dow!
 William Shakespeare

4

SUMMONS TO LOVE

Phoebus, arise!
And paint the sable skies
With azure, white, and red;
Rouse Memnon's mother from her Tithon's bed
That she may thy career with roses spread;
The nightingales thy coming each-where sing:
Make an eternal Spring!
Give life to this dark world which lieth dead;
Spread forth thy golden hair
In larger locks than thou wast wont before,
And emperor-like decore
With diadem of pearl thy temples fair;

Chase hence the ugly night,
Which serves but to make dear thy glorious light.

—This is that happy morn,
That day, long-wishéd day
Of all my life so dark,
(If cruel stars have not my ruin sworn
And fates my hopes betray),
Which, purely white, deserves
An everlasting diamond should it mark.
This is the morn should bring unto this grove
My Love, to hear and recompense my love.
Fair King, who all preserves,
But show thy blushing beams,
And thou two sweeter eyes
Shalt see than those which by Penéus' streams
Did once thy heart surprize.
Now, Flora, deck thyself in fairest guise;
If that ye winds would hear
A voice surpassing far Amphion's lyre,
Your furious chiding stay;
Let Zephyr only breathe,
And with her tresses play.

—The winds all silent are,
And Phoebus in his chair
Ensaffroning sea and air
Makes vanish every star;
Night like a drunkard reels
Beyond the hills, to shun his flaming wheels;
The fields with flowers are deck'd in every hue,
The clouds with orient gold spangle their blue;
Here is the pleasant place—
And nothing wanting is, save She, alas!

William Drummond of Hawthornden

TIME AND LOVE

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich proud cost of out-worn buried age;
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed,
And brass eternal, slave to mortal rage;
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss, and loss with store;
When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself confounded to decay,
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminat—
That Time will come and take my Love away:
—This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

William Shakespeare

- 6 Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
But sad mortality o'ersways their power,
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
O how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout
Nor gates of steel so strong, but time decays?
O fearful meditation! where, alack!
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back?
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
O! none, unless this miracle have might:
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

William Shakespeare

THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE

7

Come live with me and be my Love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dale and field,
And all the craggy mountains yield.

There will we sit upon the rocks
And see the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroider'd all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my Love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat,
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall on an ivory table be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my Love.

Christopher Marlowe

OMNIA VINCIT

Fain would I change that note
To which fond Love hath charm'd me
Long, long to sing by rote,
Fancying that that harm'd me;
Yet when this thought doth come:
"Love is the perfect sum
Of all delight,"
I have no other choice
Either for pen or voice
To sing or write.

O Love! they wrong thee much
That say thy sweet is bitter,
When thy rich fruit is such
As nothing can be sweeter.
Fair house of joy and bliss,
Where truest pleasure is,
I do adore thee;
I know thee what thou art,
I serve thee with my heart,
And fall before thee!

Unknown

A MADRIGAL

Crabbed Age and Youth
Cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather;
Youth like summer brave,

Age like winter bare;
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild, and Age is tame:—
Age, I do abhor thee,
Youth, I do adore thee;
O! my Love, my Love is young.
Age, I do defy thee—
O sweet shepherd, hie thee,
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

William Shakespeare

10

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

William Shakespeare

- 11 It was a lover and his lass—
With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino!
That o'er the green corn-field did pass
In spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding-a-ding:
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

Between the acres of the rye—
With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino!
These pretty country folks would lie,
In spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding-a-ding:
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

This carol they began that hour—
With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino!
How that life was but a flower
In spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding-a-ding:
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

And therefore take the present time—
With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino!
For love is crownéd with the prime
In spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding-a-ding:
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

William Shakespeare

Absence, hear thou this protestation
Against thy strength,
Distance, and length:

Do what thou canst for alteration,
For hearts of truest mettle
Absence doth join, and Time doth settle.

Who loves a mistress of such quality,
His mind hath found
Affection's ground
Beyond time, place, and mortality.
To hearts that cannot vary
Absence is present, Time doth tarry.

By absence this good means I gain:
That I can catch her,
Where none can match her,
In some close corner of my brain;
There I embrace and kiss her:
And so I both enjoy and miss her.

John Donne

VIA AMORIS

High-way, since you my chief Parnassus be,
And that my Muse, to some ears not unsweet,
Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet
More oft than to a chamber-melody,—
Now, blessed you bear onward blessed me
To her, where I my heart, safe-left, shall meet;
My Muse and I must you of duty greet
With thanks and wishes, wishing thankfully:
Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed;
By no encroachment wrong'd, nor time forgot;
Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed;
And, that you know I envy you no lot

Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,—
Hundreds of years you Stella's feet may kiss!

Sir Philip Sidney

ABSENCE

Being your slave, what should I do but tend
Upon the hours and times of your desire?
I have no precious time at all to spend
Nor services to do, till you require;
Nor dare I chide the world-without-end-hour
Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for you,
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour
When you have bid your servant once adieu;
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,
But like a sad slave, stay and think of nought
Save, where you are, how happy you make those;—
So true a fool is love, that in your will
Though you do anything, he thinks no ill.

William Shakespeare

- 15 How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen,
What old December's bareness everywhere!
And yet this time removed was summer's time;
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,
Like widow'd wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans, and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,

And, thou away, the very birds are mute ;
Or if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

William Shakespeare

16

A CONSOLATION

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweepe my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least ;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee—and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate ;
For thy sweet love remember'd, such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

William Shakespeare

17

THE UNCHANGEABLE

O never say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify :
As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie.
That is my home of love ; if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, I return again,
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.

Never believe, though in my nature reign'd
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stain'd
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good:
For "nothing" this wide universe I call,
Save thou, my rose: in it thou art my all.

William Shakespeare

18

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For, as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride;
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd
In process of the seasons have I seen;
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah! yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived:
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred,—
Ere you were born, was beauty's summer dead.

William Shakespeare

19

ROSALINE

Like to the clear in highest sphere
Where all imperial glory shines,
Of selfsame colour is her hair
Whether unfolded, or in twines:
Heigh ho, fair Rosaline!

Her eyes are sapphires set in snow,
Resembling heaven by every wink;
The Gods do fear whenas they glow,
And I do tremble when I think

Heigh ho, would she were mine!

Her cheeks are like the blushing cloud
That beautifies Aurora's face,
Or like the silver crimson shroud
That Phoebus' smiling looks doth grace:

Heigh ho, fair Rosaline!

Her lips are like two budded roses
Whom ranks of lilies neighbour nigh,
Within which bounds she balm encloses
Apt to entice a deity:

Heigh ho, would she were mine!

Her neck is like a stately tower
Where Love himself imprison'd lies,
To watch for glances every hour
From her divine and sacred eyes:

Heigh ho, for Rosaline!

With orient pearl, with ruby red,
With marble white, with sapphire blue
Her body every way is fed,
Yet soft in touch and sweet in view:

Heigh ho, fair Rosaline!

Nature herself her shape admires;
The Gods are wounded in her sight;
And love forsakes his heavenly fires
And at her eyes his brand doth light:

Heigh ho, would she were mine!

Then muse not, Nymphs, though I bemoan

The absence of fair Rosaline,
Since for a fair there's fairer none,
Nor for her virtues so divine:
Heigh ho, fair Rosaline;
Heigh ho, my heart! would God that she were mine!
Thomas Lodge

20 Omitted from this edition.

21 A PICTURE

Sweet Love, if thou wilt gain a monarch's glory,
Subdue her heart, who makes me glad and sorry:
Out of thy golden quiver
Take thou thy strongest arrow
That will through bone and marrow,
And me and thee of grief and fear deliver:—
But come behind, for if she look upon thee,
Alas! poor Love! then thou art woe-begone thee.
Unknown

22 A SONG FOR MUSIC

Weep you no more, sad fountains;
What need you flow so fast?
Look how the snowy mountains
Heaven's sun doth gently waste!
But my Sun's heavenly eyes
View not your weeping,
That now lies sleeping,
Softly, now softly lies,
Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,
A rest that peace begets:—

Doth not the sun rise smiling,
When fair at even he sets?
—Rest you, then, rest, sad eyes!
Melt not in weeping!
While She lies sleeping,
Softly, now softly lies,
Sleeping!

Unknown

23

TO HIS LOVE

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometimes declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd.
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wanderest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:—
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

William Shakespeare

24

TO HIS LOVE

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead, and lovely knights;

Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have exprest
Ev'n such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all, you prefiguring;
And for they look'd but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

William Shakespeare

Turn back, you wanton flyer,
And answer my desire
 With mutual greeting.
Yet bend a little nearer,—
True beauty still shines clearer
 In closer meeting!
Hearts with hearts delighted
Should strive to be united,
Each other's arms with arms enchaining,—
 Hearts with a thought,
Rosy lips with a kiss still entertaining.

What harvest half so sweet is
As still to reap the kisses
 Grown ripe in sowing?
And straight to be receiver
Of that which thou art giver,
 Rich in bestowing?

There is no strict observing
Of times' or seasons' swerving,
There is ever one fresh spring abiding.
Then what we sow with our lips
Let us reap, love's gains dividing.
Thomas Campion

26

ADVICE TO A GIRL

Never love unless you can
Bear with all the faults of man!
Men sometimes will jealous be
Though but little cause they see,
And hang the head as discontent,
And speak what straight they will repent.

Men, that but one Saint adore,
Make a show of love to more;
Beauty must be scorn'd in none,
Though but truly served in one:
For what is courtship but disguise?
True hearts may have dissembling eyes.

Men, when their affairs require,
Must awhile themselves retire;
Sometimes hunt, and sometimes hawk,
And not ever sit and talk.
If these and such-like you can bear,
Then like, and love, and never fear!
Thomas Campion

27

LOVE'S PERJURIES

On a day, alack the day!
Love, whose month is ever May,
Spied a blossom passing fair

Playing in the wanton air.
Through the velvet leaves the wind,
All unseen, 'gan passage find,
That the lover, sick to death,
Wished himself the heaven's breath.
"Air," quoth he, "thy cheeks may blow;
Air, would I might triumph so!
But, alack, my hand is sworn
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn.
Vow, alack, for youth unmeet,
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet.
Do not call it sin in me
That I am forsworn for thee:
Thou for whom Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiope were,
And deny himself for Jove,
Turning mortal for thy love."

William Shakespeare

A SUPPLICATION

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant;
My great travail so gladly spent:
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know, since whan
The suit, the service none tell can:
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways,
The painful patience in delays:
Forget not yet!

Forget not! O, forget not this:
How long ago hath been, and is
The mind that never meant amiss:
Forget not yet!

Forget not then thine own approved
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved:
Forget not this!
Sir Thomas Wyatt

29

TO AURORA

O if thou knew'st how thou thyself dost harm,
And dost prejudice thy bliss, and spoil my rest;
Then thou would'st melt the ice out of thy breast
And thy relenting heart would kindly warm.
O if thy pride did not our joys control,
What world of loving wonders should'st thou see!
For if I saw thee once transform'd in me,
Then in thy bosom I would pour my soul;
Then all my thoughts should in thy visage shine;
And if that aught mischanced, thou should'st not moan
Nor bear the burthen of thy griefs alone;
No, I would have my share in what were thine:
And whilst we thus should make our sorrows one,
This happy harmony would make them none.

William Alexander, Earl of Sterline

30

IN LACRIMAS

I saw my Lady weep,
And Sorrow proud to be advancéd so
In those fair eyes where all perfections keep.
Her face was full of woe,

But such a woe (believe me) as wins more hearts
Than Mirth can do with her enticing parts.

Sorrow was there made fair,
And Passion, wise; Tears, a delightful thing;
Silence, beyond all speech, a wisdom rare:
She made her sighs to sing,
And all things with so sweet a sadness move
As made my heart at once both grieve and love.

O fairer than aught else
The world can show, leave off in time to grieve!
Enough, enough: your joyful look excels:
Tears kill the heart, believe.
O strive not to be excellent in woe,
Which only breeds your beauty's overthrow.

Unknown

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:—
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out ev'n to the edge of doom:—
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

William Shakespeare

32

A DITTY

My true-love hath my heart, and I have his,
 By just exchange one for another given;
 I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
 There never was a better bargain driven:
 My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.

His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
 My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides;
 He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
 I cherish his because in me it bides:

 My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.
 Sir Philip Sidney

33

LOVE'S INSIGHT

Though others may Her brow adore,
 Yet more must I, that therein see far more
 Than any other's eyes have power to see.

 She is to me
 More than to any others she can be!
 I can discern more secret notes
 That in the margin of her cheeks Love quotes,
 Than any else besides have art to read.

 No looks proceed
 From those fair eyes but to me wonder breed.
 Unknown

34

LOVE'S OMNIPRESENCE

Were I as base as is the lowly plain,
 And you, my love, as high as heaven above,
 Yet should the thoughts of me, your humble swain,
 Ascend to heaven, in honour of my Love.

Were I as high as heaven above the plain,
 And you, my love, as humble and as low
 As are the deepest bottoms of the main,
 Whereso'er you were, with you my love should go.
 Were you the earth, dear love, and I the skies,
 My love should shine on you like to the sun,
 And look upon you with ten thousand eyes
 Till heaven wax'd blind, and till the world were done.
 Whereso'er I am, below, or else above you,
 Whereso'er you are, my heart shall truly love you.

Joshua Sylvester

CARPE DIEM

O Mistress mine, where are you roaming?
 O stay and hear! your true-love's coming
 That can sing both high and low.
 Trip no further, pretty sweeting:
 Journeys end in lovers meeting—
 Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter:
 Present mirth hath present laughter;
 What's to come is still unsure;
 In delay there lies no plenty,—
 Then come and kiss me, Sweet-and-twenty:
 Youth's a stuff will not endure.

William Shakespeare

AN HONEST AUTOLYCUS

Fine knacks for ladies, cheap, choice, brave, and new,
 Good penny-worths,—but money cannot move:
 I keep a fair but for the Fair to view;
 A beggar may be liberal of love.

Though all my wares be trash, the heart is true—
The heart is true.

Great gifts are guiles and look for gifts again;
My trifles come as treasures from my mind;
It is a precious jewel to be plain;
Sometimes in shell the orient'st pearls we find:—
Of others take a sheaf, of me a grain!
Of me a grain!

Unknown

37

WINTER

When icicles hang by the wall
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipt, and ways be foul:
Then nightly sings the staring owl
Tu-whit!

Tu-who! A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all about the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl:
Then nightly sings the staring owl
Tu-whit!

Tu-who! A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.
William Shakespeare

38

That time of year thou may'st in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by:
—This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

William Shakespeare

39

MEMORY

When to the sessions of sweet, silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste.
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long-since-cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight.
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoan'd moan,
Which I new pay, as if not paid before.
—But if the while I think on thee, dear Friend,
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

William Shakespeare

40

SLEEP

Come, Sleep, O Sleep! the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low;
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so:
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf of noise and blind of light,
A rosy garland and a weary head;
And if these things, as being thine in right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Sir Philip Sidney

41

REVOLUTIONS

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave, doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:—
And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

William Shakespeare

42

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate;
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?
And for that riches where is my deserving?
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
And so my patent back again is swerving.
Thyself thou gav'st, thy own worth then not knowing,
Or me, to whom thou gav'st it, else mistaking;
So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
Comes home again, on better judgment making.
Thus have I had thee as a dream doth flatter:
In sleep, a king; but waking, no such matter.

William Shakespeare

43

THE LIFE WITHOUT PASSION

They that have power to hurt, and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmovéd, cold, and to temptation slow,—
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces,
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others, but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die;
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

William Shakespeare

44

THE LOVER'S APPEAL

And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay! for shame,
To save thee from the blame
Of all my grief and grame.
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath loved thee so long
In wealth and woe among:
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath given thee my heart
Never for to depart
Neither for pain nor smart;
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
And have no more pity
Of him that loveth thee?
Alas! thy cruelty!
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

Sir Thomas Wyatt

45

THE NIGHTINGALE

As it fell upon a day
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade

Which a grove of myrtles made,
Beasts did leap and birds did sing,
Trees did grow and plants did spring;
Every thing did banish moan
Save the Nightingale alone.
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Lean'd her breast up-till a thorn,
And there sung the dolefull'st ditty
That to hear it was great pity.
"Fie, fie, fie," now would she cry;
"Teru, teru," by and by:
That to hear her so complain
Scarce I could from tears refrain;
For her griefs so lively shown
Made me think upon mine own.
—Ah, thought I, thou mourn'st in vain,
None takes pity on thy pain:
Senseless trees, they cannot hear thee,
Ruthless beasts, they will not cheer thee;
King Pandion, he is dead,
All thy friends are lapp'd in lead;
All thy fellow birds do sing
Careless of thy sorrowing.
Even so, poor bird, like thee
None alive will pity me.

Richard Barnefield

- 46 Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable Night,
Brother to Death, in silent darkness born,
Relieve my languish, and restore the light;
With dark forgetting of my care, return.
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth;

Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
Without the torment of the night's untruth
Cease, dreams, the images of day-desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow;
Never let rising sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow:
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

Samuel Daniel

47

The nightingale, as soon as April bringeth
Unto her rested sense a perfect waking,
While late-bare earth, proud of new clothing, springeth
Sings out her woes, a thorn her song-book making;
And mournfully bewailing,
Her throat in tunes expresseth
What grief her breast oppresseth
For Tereus' force on her chaste will prevailing.

O Philomela fair, O take some gladness,
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness:
Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.

Alas, she hath no other cause of anguish
But Tereus' love, on her by strong hand wroken,
Wherein she suffering, all her spirits languish,
Full womanlike complains her will was broken.
But I, who, daily craving,
Cannot have to content me,
Have more cause to lament me,
Since wanting is more woe than too much having.

O Philomela fair, O take some gladness
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness :

Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth ;
Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.

Sir Philip Sidney

FRUSTRA

Take, O take those lips away
That so sweetly were forsworn,
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn ;
But my kisses bring again,

Bring again—

Seals of love, but seal'd in vain,
Seal'd in vain !

William Shakespeare

LOVE'S FAREWELL

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part,—
Nay I have done, you get no more of me ;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, passion speechless lies,
When faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And innocence is closing up his eyes,
—Now if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover !

Michael Drayton

50 IN IMAGINE PERTRANSIT HOMO

Follow thy fair sun, unhappy shadow!
 Though thou be black as night
 And she made all of light,
Yet follow thy fair sun, unhappy shadow!

Follow her, whose light thy light depriveth!
 Though here thou liv'st disgraced
 And she in heaven is placed,
Yet follow her whose light the world reviveth!

Follow those pure beams, whose beauty burneth,
 That so have scorched thee
 As thou still black must be
Till her kind beams thy black to brightness turneth.

Follow her, while yet her glory shineth!
 There comes a luckless night
 That will dim all her light:
—And this the black unhappy shade divineth.

Follow still, since so thy fates ordained!
 The sun must have his shade,
 Till both at once do fade,—
The sun still proved, the shadow still disdainéd.

Thomas Campion

51 BLIND LOVE

O me! what eyes hath Love put in my head,
Which have no correspondence with true sight;
Or if they have, where is my judgment fled,
That censures falsely what they see aright?

If that be fair whereon my false eyes dote,
What means the world to say it is not so?
If it be not, then love doth well denote
Love's eye is not so true as all men's. No,
How can it? O how can love's eye be true,
That is so vex'd with watching and with tears?
No marvel then though I mistake my view:
The sun itself sees not till heaven clears.
O cunning Love! with tears thou keep'st me blind,
Lest eyes well-seeing thy foul faults should find!

William Shakespeare

52

Sleep, angry beauty, sleep and fear not me!
For who a sleeping lion dares provoke?
It shall suffice me here to sit and see
Those lips shut up that never kindly spoke.
What sight can more content a lover's mind
Than beauty seeming harmless, if not kind?

My words have charm'd her, for secure she sleeps,
Though guilty much of wrong done to my love;
And in her slumber, see! she close-eyed weeps:
Dreams often more than waking passions move.
Plead, Sleep, my cause, and make her soft like thee,
That she in peace may wake and pity me.

Thomas Campion

53

THE UNFAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS

While that the sun with his beams hot
Scorchéd the fruits in dale and mountain,
Philon the shepherd, late forgot,

Sitting beside a crystal fountain,
In shadow of a green oak tree
Upon his pipe this song play'd he:
"Adieu, Love, adieu, Love, untrue Love,
Untrue Love, untrue Love, adieu, Love;
Your mind is light, soon lost for new love.

"So long as I was in your sight
I was your heart, your soul, and treasure;
And evermore you sobb'd and sigh'd
Burning in flames beyond all measure:
—Three days endured your love to me,
And it was lost in other three!
Adieu, Love, adieu, Love, untrue Love,
Untrue Love, untrue Love, adieu, Love;
Your mind is light, soon lost for new love.

"Another Shepherd you did see
To whom your heart was soon enchainéd;
Full soon your love was leapt from me,
Full soon my place he had obtainéd.
Soon came a third, your love to win,
And we were out and he was in.
Adieu, Love, adieu, Love, untrue Love,
Untrue Love, untrue Love, adieu, Love;
Your mind is light, soon lost for new love.

"Sure you have made me passing glad
That you your mind so soon removéd
Before that I the leisure had
To choose you for my best belovéd:
For all your love was past and done
Two days before it was begun.
Adieu, Love, adieu, Love, untrue Love,

Untrue Love, untrue Love, adieu, Love;
Your mind is light, soon lost for new love."

Unknown

ADVICE TO A LOVER

The sea hath many thousand sands,
The sun hath motes as many,
The sky is full of stars; and Love
As full of woes as any:
Believe me, that do know the elf,
And make no trial by thyself!

It is in truth a pretty toy
For babes to play withal:—
But O! the honeys of our youth
Are oft our age's gall!
Self-proof in time will make thee know
He was a prophet told thee so:

A prophet that, Cassandra-like,
Tells truth without belief;
For headstrong Youth will run his race,
Although his goal be grief:—
Love's Martyr, when his heat is past,
Proves Care's Confessor at the last.

Unknown

A RENUNCIATION

Thou art not fair, for all thy red and white,
For all those rosy ornaments in thee,—
Thou art not sweet, though made of mere delight,
Nor fair, nor sweet—unless thou pity me!

I will not soothe thy fancies; thou shalt prove
That beauty is no beauty without love.

—Yet love not me, nor seek not to allure
My thoughts with beauty, were it more divine;
Thy smiles and kisses I cannot endure,
I'll not be wrapp'd up in those arms of thine:
—Now show it, if thou be a woman right—
Embrace and kiss and love me in despite!

Thomas Campion

56 Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
 Thou art not so unkind
 As man's ingratitude;
 Thy tooth is not so keen
 Because thou art not seen,
 Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly;
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
 Then, heigh ho! the holly!
 This life is most jolly.

 Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
 Thou dost not bite so nigh
 As benefits forgot;
 Though thou the waters warp,
 Thy sting is not so sharp
 As friend remember'd not.
Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly;
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
 Then, heigh ho! the holly!
 This life is most jolly.

William Shakespeare

A SWEET LULLABY

Come little babe, come silly soul,
Thy father's shame, thy mother's grief;
Born, as I doubt, to all our dole,
And to thy self unhappy chief.

Sing lullaby and lap it warm,
Poor soul that thinks no creature harm.

Thou little think'st and less dost know,
The cause of this thy mother's moan,
Thou want'st the wit to wail her woe,
And I myself am all alone.

Why dost thou weep? why dost thou wail?
And knowest not yet what thou dost ail.

Come little wretch, ah silly heart,
Mine only joy, what can I more?
If there be any wrong thy smart
That may the destinies implore:

'Twas I, I say, against my will;
I wail the time, but be thou still.

And dost thou smile, oh thy sweet face!
Would God Himself He might thee see,
No doubt thou would'st soon purchase grace,
I know right well, for thee and me;

But come to mother, babe, and play,
For father false is fled away.

Sweet boy, if it by fortune chance,
Thy father home again to send,
If death do strike me with his lance,
Yet mayst thou me to him commend.

If any ask thy mother's name,
Tell how by love she purchased blame.

Then will his gentle heart soon yield;
I know him of a noble mind;
Although a Lion in the field,
A Lamb in town thou shalt him find:
 Ask blessing, babe, be not afraid,
 His sugar'd words hath me betray'd.

Then mayst thou joy and be right glad,
Although in woe I seem to moan,
Thy father is no rascal lad,
A noble youth of blood and bone;
 His glancing looks, if he once smile,
 Right honest women may beguile.

Come, little boy, and rock asleep,
Sing lullaby and be thou still;
I, that can do nought else but weep,
Will sit by thee and wail my fill:
 God bless my babe, and lullaby,
 From this thy father's quality!
Unknown

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What! may it be that e'en in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries!
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
I read it in thy looks: thy languished grace,
To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.
Then, e'en of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?

Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue, there, ungratefulness?

Sir Philip Sidney

59

O CRUDELIS AMOR

When thou must home to shades of underground,
And there arrived, a new admiréd guest,
The beauteous spirits do engirt thee round,
White Iopé, blithe Helen, and the rest,
To hear the stories of thy finish'd love
From that smooth tongue whose music hell can move;

Then wilt thou speak of banqueting delights,
Of masques and revels which sweet youth did make,
Of tourneys and great challenges of knights,
And all these triumphs for thy beauty's sake:
When thou hast told these honours done to thee,
Then tell, O tell, how thou didst murder me!

Thomas Campion

60 SEPHESTIA'S SONG TO HER CHILD

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.

Mother's wag, pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy;
When thy father first did see
Such a boy by him and me,
He was glad, I was woe;
Fortune changéd made him so,
When he left his pretty boy,
Last his sorrow, first his joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.

Streaming tears that never stint,
Like pearl drops from a flint,
Fell by course from his eyes,
That one another's place supplies;
Thus he grieved in every part,
Tears of blood fell from his heart,
When he left his pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

The wanton smiled, father wept,
Mother cried, baby leapt;
More he crow'd, more we cried,
Nature could not sorrow hide.
He must go, he must kiss
Child and mother, baby bless,
For he left his pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

Robert Greene

My thoughts hold mortal strife;
I do detest my life,
And with lamenting cries,
Peace to my soul to bring,
Oft call that prince which here doth monarchize;
—But he, grim grinning King,

Who caitiffs scorns, and doth the best surprise,
Late having deck'd with beauty's rose his tomb,
Disdains to crop a weed, and will not come.

William Drummond

DIRGE OF LOVE

Come away, come away, Death,
And in sad cypres let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O prepare it!
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet
On my black coffin let there be strown;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown.
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O where
Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there.

William Shakespeare

TO HIS LUTE

My lute, be as thou wert when thou didst grow
With thy green mother in some shady grove,
When immelodious winds but made thee move,
And birds their ramage did on thee bestow.
Since that dear Voice which did thy sounds approve,
Which wont in such harmonious strains to flow,

Is reft from Earth to tune those spheres above,
What art thou but a harbinger of woe?
Thy pleasing notes be pleasing notes no more,
But orphans' wailings to the fainting ear;
Each stroke a sigh, each sound draws forth a tear;
For which be silent as in woods before:
Or if that any hand to touch thee deign,
Like widow'd turtle, still her loss complain.

William Drummond

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe and eat:
To thee the reed is as the oak.
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning flash
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finish'd joy and moan.
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

William Shakespeare

A SEA DIRGE

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell.
Hark! now I hear them,—
“ Ding, dong, bell.”

William Shakespeare

A LAND DIRGE

Call for the robin-redbreast and the wren,
Since o'er shady groves they hover
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men;
Call unto his funeral dole
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm
And, when gay tombs are robb'd, sustain no harm;
But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men;
For with his nails he'll dig them up again.

John Webster

POST MORTEM

If Thou survive my well-contented day
When that churl Death my bones with dust shall cover,
And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,
Compare them with the bettering of the time;
And though they be outstripp'd by every pen,

Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme
Exceeded by the height of happier men.
O then vouchsafe me but this loving thought—
“Had my friend’s Muse grown with this growing age,
A dearer birth than this his love had brought,
To march in ranks of better equipage;
But since he died, and poets better prove,
Theirs for their style I’ll read, his for his love.”

William Shakespeare

68 THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell.
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O if, I say, you look upon this verse
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
But let your love even with my life decay;
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

William Shakespeare

69 YOUNG LOVE

Tell me where is Fancy bred,
Or in the heart, or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?

Reply, reply.

It is engender'd in the eyes;
With gazing fed; and Fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring Fancy's knell;
I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.
—Ding, dong, bell.

William Shakespeare

70

A DILEMMA

Lady, when I behold the roses sprouting,
Which, clad in damask mantles, deck the arbours,
And then behold your lips where sweet love harbours,
My eyes present me with a double doubting:
For viewing both alike, hardly my mind supposes
Whether the roses be your lips, or your lips the roses.

Unknown

71

ROSALYND'S MADRIGAL

Love in my bosom, like a bee,
Doth suck his sweet;
Now with his wings he plays with me,
Now with his feet.
Within mine eyes he makes his nest,
His bed amidst my tender breast;
My kisses are his daily feast,
And yet he robs me of my rest:
Ah! wanton, will ye?

And if I sleep, then percheth he
With pretty flight,
And makes his pillow of my knee
The livelong night.

Strike I my lute, he tunes the string;
 He music plays, if so I sing;
 He lends me every lovely thing,
 Yet cruel he my heart doth sting:
 Whist, wanton, will ye?—

Else I with roses every day
 Will whip you hence,
 And bind you, when you long to play,
 For your offence;
 I'll shut my eyes to keep you in;
 I'll make you fast it for your sin;
 I'll count your power not worth a pin;
 —Alas! what hereby shall I win,
 If he gainsay me?

What if I beat the wanton boy
 With many a rod?
 He will repay me with annoy,
 Because a god.
 Then sit thou safely on my knee,
 And let thy bower my bosom be;
 Lurk in mine eyes, I like of thee,
 O Cupid! so thou pity me,
 Spare not, but play thee!
Thomas Lodge

Cupid and my Campaspé play'd
 At cards for kisses: Cupid paid.
 He stakes his quiver, bow, and arrows,
 His mother's doves, and team of sparrows;
 Loses them too; then down he throws

The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how);
With these, the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple on his chin;
All these did my Campaspé win:
And last he set her both his eyes—
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.

O Love! has she done this to thee?

What shall, alas! become of me?

John Lyly

- 73 Pack, clouds, away, and welcome day,
 With night we banish sorrow;
Sweet air, blow soft; mount, larks, aloft
 To give my Love good-morrow!
Wings from the wind to please her mind,
 Notes from the lark I'll borrow;
Bird, prune thy wing; nightingale, sing,
 To give my Love good-morrow;
 To give my Love good-morrow;
 Notes from them both I'll borrow.

Wake from thy nest, Robin-red-breast,
 Sing, birds, in every furrow;
And from each hill let music shrill
 Give my fair Love good-morrow!
Blackbird and thrush in every bush,
 Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow!
You pretty elves, amongst yourselves
 Sing my fair Love good-morrow;
 To give my Love good-morrow
 Sing, birds, in every furrow!

Thomas Heywood

Calm was the day, and through the trembling air
Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play—
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
Hot Titan's beams, which then did glister fair;
When I, (whom sullen care,
Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
In princes' court, and expectation vain
Of idle hopes, which still do fly away
Like empty shadows, did afflict by brain)
Walked forth to ease my pain
Along the shore of silver-streaming Thames,
Whose ruddy bank, the which his river hems,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meads adorn'd with dainty gems
Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
And crown their paramours
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

There in a meadow by the river's side
A flock of nymphs I chancéd to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks all loose untied
As each had been a bride;
And each one had a little wicker basket
Made of fine twigs, entrailéd curiously,
In which they gather'd flowers to fill their flasket,
And with fine fingers cropt full feateously
The tender stalks on high.
Of every sort which in that meadow grew
They gather'd some: the violet, pallid blue,
The little daisy that at evening closes,

The virgin lily, and the primrose true,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegrooms' posies
Against the bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two Swans of goodly hue
Come softly swimming down along the Lee;
Two fairer birds I yet did never see:
The snow which doth the top of Pindus strow
Did never whiter show,
Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
Yet Leda was, they say, as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near;
So purely white they were
That even the gentle stream, the which them bare
Seemed foul to them, and bade his billows spare
To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
Soil their fair plumes with water not so fair
And mar their beauties bright,
That shone as Heaven's light
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Eftsoons the nymphs, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood
As they came floating on the crystal flood;
Whom when they saw, they stood amazed still
Their wondering eyes to fill.
Them seem'd they never saw a sight so fair
Of fowls, so lovely that they sure did deem
Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair

Which through the sky draw Venus' silver team;
For sure they did not seem
To be begot of any earthly seed,
But rather Angels, or of Angels' breed;
Yet were they bred of summer's heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
The earth did fresh array:
So fresh they seem'd as day,
Ev'n as their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odours yield,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus' waters they did seem,
When down along by pleasant Tempe's shore
Scatter'd with flowers, through Thessaly they stream,
That they appear, through lilies' plenteous store,
Like a bride's chamber-floor.
Two of those nymphs meanwhile two garlands bound
Of freshest flowers which in that mead they found,
The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowy foreheads therewithal they crown'd,
Whilst one did sing this lay
Prepared against that day,
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly till I end my song.

"Ye gentle birds! the world's fair ornament,
And Heaven's glory, whom this happy hour
Doth lead unto your lovers' blissful bower,

Joy may you have, and gentle heart's content
Of your love's couplement;
And let fair Venus, that is queen of love,
With her heart-quelling son upon you smile,
Whose smile, they say, hath virtue to remove
All love's dislike, and friendship's faulty guile
For ever to assoil.
Let endless peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessed plenty wait upon your board;
And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
That fruitful issue may to you afford,
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joys redound
Upon your bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song."

So ended she; and all the rest around
To her redoubled that, her undersong,
Which said their bridal day should not be long;
And gentle Echo from the neighbour ground
Their accents did resound.
So forth those joyous birds did pass along
Adown the Lee that to them murmur'd low,
As he would speak but that he lack'd a tongue;
Yet did by signs his glad affection show,
Making his stream run slow.
And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
'Gan flock about these twain, that did excel
The rest so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they, enragéd well,
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native source,
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of ancient fame.

There when they came whereas those bricky towers
The which on Thames' broad agéd back to ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilome wont the Templar-knights to bide,
Till they decay'd through pride;
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gainéd gifts and goodly grace
Of that great lord, which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case—
But ah; here fits not well
Old woes, but joys to tell
Against the bridal day, which is not long:

Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late through all Spain did
thunder,

And Hercules' two pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear.

—Fair branch of honour, flower of chivalry!
That fillest England with thy triumphs' fame
Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
And endless happiness of thine own name
That promiseth the same;
That through thy prowess and victorious arms
Thy country may be freed from foreign harms,
And great Elisa's glorious name may ring
Through all the world, fill'd with thy wide alarms,

Which some brave Muse may sing
To ages following,
Upon the bridal day, which is not long :
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issuing
Like radiant Hesper when his golden hair
In th' ocean billows he hath bathéd fair,
Descended to the river's open viewing
With a great train ensuing.
Above the rest were goodly to be seen
Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature,
Beseeming well the bower of any queen,
With gifts of wit and ornaments of nature,
Fit for so goodly stature,
That like the twins of Jove they seem'd in sight
Which deck the baldric of the Heavens bright;
They two, forth pacing to the river's side,
Received those two fair brides, their love's delight;
Which, at th' appointed tide,
Each one did make his bride
Against their bridal day, which is not long :
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Edmund Spenser

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers?
O sweet content!
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplex'd?
O punishment!
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vex'd
To add to golden numbers, golden numbers?

O sweet content! O sweet, O sweet content!

Work apace, apace, apace, apace;

Honest labour bears a lovely face;

Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

Canst drink the waters of the crisped spring?

O sweet content!

Swimm'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears?

O punishment!

Then he that patiently want's burden bears,

No burden bears, but is a king, a king!

O sweet content! O sweet, O sweet content!

Work apace, apace, apace, apace;

Honest labour bears a lovely face;

Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

Thomas Dekker

Come, cheerful day, part of my life to me;

For while thou view'st me with thy fading light

Part of my life doth still depart with thee,

And I still onward haste to my last night:

Time's fatal wings do ever forward fly—

So every day we live, a day we die.

But O ye nights, ordain'd for barren rest,

How are my days deprived of life in you

When heavy sleep my soul hath dispossess,

By feignéd death life sweetly to renew!

Part of my life, in that, you life deny:

So every day we live, a day we die.

Thomas Campion

- 77 This Life, which seems so fair,
Is like a bubble blown up in the air
By sporting children's breath,
Who chase it everywhere
And strive who can most motion it bequeath.
And though it sometimes seem of its own might
Like to an eye of gold to be fix'd there,
And firm to hover in that empty height,
That only is because it is so light.
—But in that pomp it doth not long appear;
For when 'tis most admiréd, in a thought,
Because it erst was nought, it turns to nought.

William Drummond

78

SOUL AND BODY

Poor Soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
[Foil'd by] those rebel powers that thee array,
Why doth thou pine within, and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?
Then, Soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:—
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men,
And death once dead, there's no more dying then.

William Shakespeare

79

The man of life upright,
Whose guiltless heart is free

From all dishonest deeds,
Or thought of vanity;

The man whose silent days
In harmless joys are spent,
Whom hopes cannot delude
Nor sorrow discontent:

That man needs neither towers
Nor armour for defence,
Nor secret vaults to fly
From thunder's violence;

He only can behold
With unaffrighted eyes
The horrors of the deep
And terrors of the skies.

Thus, scorning all the cares
That fate or fortune brings,
He makes the heaven his book,
His wisdom heavenly things;

Good thoughts his only friends,
His wealth a well-spent age,
The earth his sober inn
And quiet pilgrimage.

Thomas Campion

Of this fair volume which we "world" do name
If we the sheets and leaves could turn with care,
Of Him who it corrects and did it frame

We clear might read the art and wisdom rare;
Find out His power which wildest powers doth tame,
His providence extending everywhere,
His justice which proud rebels doth not spare,
In every page, no period of the same.
But silly we, like foolish children, rest
Well pleased with colour'd vellum, leaves of gold,
Fair dangling ribbands, leaving what is best,
On the great Writer's sense ne'er taking hold;
Or if by chance we stay our minds on aught,
It is some picture on the margin wrought.

William Drummond

81

Doth then the world go thus, doth all thus move?
Is this the justice which on earth we find?
Is this that firm decree which all doth bind?
Are these your influences, Powers above?
Those souls which vice's moody mists most blind,
Blind Fortune, blindly, most their friend doth prove;
And they who thee, poor idol Virtue, love,
Ply like a feather toss'd by storm and wind.
Ah! if a Providence doth sway this all,
Why should best minds groan under most distress?
Or why should pride humility make thrall,
And injuries the innocent oppress?
Heavens, hinder, stop this fate; or grant a time
When good may have, as well as bad, their prime!

William Drummond

82

THE WORLD'S WAY

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry—
As: to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive Good attending captain Ill:—
—Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my Love alone.

William Shakespeare

83

A WISH

Happy were he could finish forth his fate
In some unhaunted desert, where, obscure
From all society, from love and hate
Of worldly folk, there should he sleep secure,

Then wake again, and yield God ever praise;
Content with hip, with haws, and brambleberry;
In contemplation passing still his days,
And change of holy thoughts to make him merry;

Who, when he dies, his tomb might be the bush
Where harmless robin resteth with the thrush:

—Happy were he!

Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex

The last and greatest Herald of Heaven's King,
Girt with rough skins, hies to the deserts wild,
Among that savage brood the woods forth bring,
Which he more harmless found than man, and mild.
His food was locusts, and what there doth spring,
With honey that from virgin hives distill'd.
Parch'd body, hollow eyes, some uncouth thing
Made him appear, long since from earth exiled.
There burst he forth: "All ye whose hopes rely
On God, with me amidst these deserts mourn,
Repent, repent, and from old errors turn!"
—Who listen'd to his voice, obey'd his cry?
Only the echoes, which he made relent,
Rung from their flinty caves, "Repent! Repent!"

William Drummond

BOOK TWO

85

ODE ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY

This is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing
That He our deadly forfeit should release,
And with His Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty
Wherewith He wont at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain
To welcome Him to this His new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons
bright?

See how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:

O, run, prevent them with thy humble ode
And lay it lowly at His blessed feet;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the Angel quire,
From out His secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

The Hymn

It was the winter wild
While the heaven-born Child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to Him
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woes the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But He, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;
The hookéd chariot stood
Unstain'd with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the arméd throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild oceán,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charméd wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow
Until their Lord Himself bespake, and bid them go.

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new-enlight'd world no more should need;
He saw a greater Sun appear
Than his bright throne or burning axletree could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn
Or ere the point of dawn
Sate simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they than
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep:—

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet
As never was by mortal finger strook—
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringéd noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took;
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Nature, that heard such sound
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat the airy region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heaven and Earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light
That with long beams the shamefaced night array'd;
The helméd Cherubim
And sworded Seraphim
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn quire
With unexpressive notes to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Such music, as 'tis said,
Before was never made
But when of old the Sons of Morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow;
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold;
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous Sin will melt from earthy mould;
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between
Throned in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down-steering;
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace-hall.

But wisest Fate says No;
This must not yet be so;
The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss,
So both Himself and us to glorify:
Yet first, to those ychain'd in sleep
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the
deep,

With such a horrid clang
As on Mount Sinai rang
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:
The aged Earth aghast
With terror of that blast
Shall from the surface to the centre shake,
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread His
throne.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins; for from this happy day
The old Dragon under ground,
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurpéd sway;
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The Oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the archéd roof in words deceiving;
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,

With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving:
No nightly trance or breathéd spell
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er
And the resounding shore
A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale
Edged with poplar pale
The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth
And on the holy hearth
The Lars and Lemurés moan with midnight plaint;
In urns and altars round
A drear and dying round
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-batter'd god of Palestine;
And moonéd Ashtaroth
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn:
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz
mourn.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread

His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove, or green,
Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud;
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest Hell can be his shroud;
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stoléd sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand;
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Not Typhon huge, ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe, to show His Godhead true,
Can in His swaddling bands control the damnéd crew.

So, when the sun in bed
Curtain'd with cloudy red
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave;
And the yellow-skirted fays
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved
maze.

But see! the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest;
Time is our tedious song should here have ending:
Heaven's youngest-teeméd star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
Her sleeping Lord with hand-maid lamp attending;
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harness'd Angels sit in order serviceable.

John Milton

86 SONG FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 1687

From Harmony, from heavenly Harmony
This universal frame began.
When Nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high:
"Arise, ye more than dead!"
Then cold and hot and moist and dry
In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell?
When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wondering, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound.

Less than a god they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell
That spoke so sweetly and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

The trumpet's loud clangor
Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger
And mortal alarms.
The double double double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries "Hark! the foes come;
Charge! charge! 'tis too late to retreat!"

The soft complaining flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whisper'd by the warbling lute.

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion
For the fair disdainful dame.

But oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race,
And trees unrooted left their place
Sequacious of the lyre:

But bright Ceeilia raised the wonder higher:
When to her Organ vocal breath was given,
An Angel heard, and straight appear'd—
Mistaking Earth for Heaven.

GRAND CHORUS

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the blest above;
So, when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky.

John Dryden

87 ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

Avenge, O Lord! Thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept Thy truth so pure of old
When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,
Forget not: in Thy book record their groans
Who were Thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant: that from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who, having learnt Thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe. *John Milton*

88*

HORATIAN ODE UPON CROMWELL'S RETURN
FROM IRELAND

The forward youth that would appear,
Must now forsake his Muses dear,
Nor in the shadows sing
His numbers languishing.

'Tis time to leave the books in dust,
And oil the unused armour's rust,
Removing from the wall
The corslet of the hall.

So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace,
But through adventurous war
Urgéd his active star:

And like the three-fork'd lightning, first
Breaking the clouds where it was nurst,
Did through his own side
His fiery way divide:

For 'tis all one to courage high,
The emulous, or enemy;
And with such, to enclose
Is more than to oppose;

All poems marked with a star (*) are left unannotated. These are not to be omitted, but are to be taken up by the student without the assistance which the notes give in the study of the other poems. In general, the method of study should be the one used throughout this book, though, of course, variations are to be made to fit the structure and nature of any particular poem.

Then burning through the air he went
And palaces and temples rent;
 And Caesar's head at last
 Did through his laurels blast.

'Tis madness to resist or blame
The face of angry heaven's flame;
 And if we would speak true,
 Much to the Man is due

Who, from his private gardens, where
He lived reservéd and austere,
 (As if his highest plot
 To plant the bergamot,)

Could by industrious valour climb
To ruin the great work of time,
 And cast the Kingdoms old
 Into another mould;

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient Rights in vain—
 But those do hold or break
 As men are strong or weak;

Nature, that hateth emptiness,
Allows of pentration less,
 And therefore must make room
 Where greater spirits come.

What field of all the civil war
Where his were not the deepest scar?
 And Hampton shows what part
 He had of wiser art,

Where, twining subtle fears with hope,
He wove a net of such a scope
That Charles himself might chase
To Carisbrook's narrow case,

That thence the Royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn:
While round the arméd bands
Did clap their bloody hands.

He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;

Nor call'd the Gods, with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bow'd his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.

—This was that memorable hour
Which first assured the foreéd power:
So when they did design
The Capitol's first line,

A Bleeding Head, where they begun,
Did fright the architects to run;
And yet in that the State
Foresaw its happy fate!

And now the Irish are ashamed
To see themselves in one year tamed;
So much one man can do
That does both act and know.

They can affirm his praises best,
And have, though overcome, confest
How good he is, how just
And fit for highest trust.

Nor yet grown stiffer with command,
But still in the Republic's hand—
How fit he is to sway
That can so well obey!

He to the Commons' feet presents
A Kingdom for his first year's rents,
And (what he may) forbears
His fame, to make it theirs:

And has his sword and spoils ungirt
To lay them at the Public's skirt.
So when the falcon high
Falls heavy from the sky,

She, having kill'd, no more doth search
But on the next green bough to perch,
Where, when he first does lure,
The falconer has her sure.

—What may not then our Isle presume
While victory his crest does plume?
What may not others fear
If thus he crowns each year?

As Caesar he, ere long, to Gaul,
To Italy an Hannibal,
And to all States not free
Shall climacteric be.

The Piet no shelter now shall find
 Within his parti-colour'd mind,
 But from this valour sad
 Shrink underneath the plaid—

Happy, if in the tufted brake
 The English hunter him mistake,
 Nor lay his hounds in near
 The Caledonian deer.

But Thou, the War's and Fortune's son
 March indefatigably on;
 And for the last effect
 Still keep the sword erect.

Besides the force it has to fright
 The spirits of the shady night,
 The same arts that did gain
 A power, must it maintain.

Andrew Marvell

Elegy on a Friend drowned in the Irish Channel 1637

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more
 Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
 I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
 And with forced fingers rude
 Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
 Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
 Compels me to disturb your season due:
 For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
 Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.

Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse:—
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn,
And as he passes, turn
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill;
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to the oaten flute;
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damoetas loved to hear our song.

But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,

And all their echoes, mourn :
The willows and the hazel copses green
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear
When first the white-thorn blows :
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas ?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me ! I fondly dream—
Had ye been there—For what could that have done ?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore ?

Alas ! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted shepherd's trade
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse ?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair ?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days ;

But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorréd shears
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phoebus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears;
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistening foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies;
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove.
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea.
He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain,
And question'd every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakéd promontory.
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotadés their answer brings:
That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panopé with all her sisters play'd.—
It was that fatal and perfidious bark
Built in the eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge

Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
“Ah! who hath reft,” quoth he, “my dearest pledge!”
Last came, and last did go
The Pilot of the Galilean lake.
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:
“How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such, as for their bellies’ sake
Creep and intrude and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers’ feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learn’d aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman’s art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said:
—But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.”

Return, Alphéus; the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks

On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes
That on the green turf suck the honey'd showers
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies—
For so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise:
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away,—where'er thy bones are hurl'd,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides
Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
Visitest the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold;
—Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
—And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth!

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more;
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor:
So sinks the day-star in the ocean-bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore

Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves;
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing, in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray.
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay.
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

John Milton

ON THE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Mortality, behold and fear!
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within these heaps of stones.
Here they lie, had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands,

Where from their pulpits seal'd with dust
 They preach, "In greatness is no trust."
 Here's an acre sown indeed
 With the richest royallest seed
 That the earth did e'er suck in
 Since the first man died for sin.
 Here the bones of birth have cried:
 "Though gods they were, as men they died!"
 Here are sands, ignoble things,
 Dropt from the ruin'd sides of kings.
 Here's a world of pomp and state
 Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

Francis Beaumont

91*

THE LAST CONQUEROR

Victorious men of earth, no more
 Proclaim how wide your empires are;
 Though you bind-in every shore
 And your triumphs reach as far
 As night or day,
 Yet you, proud monarchs, must obey
 And mingle with forgotten ashes, when
 Death calls ye to the crowd of common men.

Devouring Famine, Plague, and War,
 Each able to undo mankind,
 Death's servile emissaries are;
 Nor to these alone confined,
 He hath at will
 More quaint and subtle ways to kill;
 A smile or kiss, as he will use the art,
 Shall have the cunning skill to break a heart.

James Shirley

DEATH THE LEVELLER

The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armour against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings:
Sceptre and Crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at last must yield;
They tame but one another still:
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds:
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust.

James Shirley

93 WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED
TO THE CITY

Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in Arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,

Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
 He can requite thee; for he knows the charms
 That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
 And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas
 Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
 Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower:
 The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
 The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
 Went to the ground; and the repeated air
 Of sad Electra's poet had the power
 To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

John Milton

94

ON HIS BLINDNESS

When I consider how my light is spent
 Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
 And that one talent which is death to hide
 Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest He returning chide,—
 “Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?”
 I fondly ask:—But Patience, to prevent
 That murmur, soon replies: “God doth not need
 Either man's work, or His own gifts: who best
 Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best; His state
 Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest:—
 They also serve who only stand and wait.”

John Milton

95*

CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE

How happy is he born and taught
 That serveth not another's will,

Whose armour is his honest thought
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame, or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Nor vice; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good;

Who hath his life from rumours freed,
Whose conscience is his strong retreat,
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make oppressors great;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend,
And entertains the harmless day
With a religious book or friend;

—This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall;
Lord of himself, though not of lands;
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Sir Henry Wotton

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make Man better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,

To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere:
 A lily of a day
 Is fairer far in May,
 Although it fall and die that night—
 It was the plant and flower of Light.
 In small proportions we just beauties see;
 And in short measures life may perfect be.
Ben Jonson

97

THE GIFTS OF GOD

When God at first made Man,
 Having a glass of blessings standing by,
 "Let us," said He, "pour on him all we can;
 Let the world's riches, which disperséd lie,
 Contract into a span."

So strength first made a way;
 Then beauty flow'd, then wisdom, honour, pleasure.
 When almost all was out, God made a stay,
 Perceiving that alone, of all His treasure,
 Rest in the bottom lay.

"For if I should," said He,
 "Bestow this jewel also on My creature,
 He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
 And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature:
 So both should losers be.

"Yet let him keep the rest,
 But keep them with repining restlessness;
 Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
 If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
 May toss him to My breast."

George Herbert

THE RETREAT

Happy those early days, when I
Shined in my Angel-infancy!
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestial thought;
When yet I had not walk'd above
A mile or two from my first Love,
And looking back, at that short space
Could see a glimpse of His bright face;
When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

O how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train;
From whence th' enlighten'd spirit sees
That shady City of palm trees!
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way:—
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;

And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

Henry Vaughan

99

TO MR. LAWRENCE

Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank and ways are mire,
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
From the hard season gaining? Time will run
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lily and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

John Milton

100

TO CYRIACK SKINNER

Cyriack, whose grandsire, on the royal bench
Of British Themis, with no mean applause
Pronounced, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
Which others at their bar so often wrench,
To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth, that after no repenting draws;
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede intend, and what the French.

To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way,
For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

John Milton

101* A HYMN IN PRAISE OF NEPTUNE

Of Neptune's empire let us sing,
At whose command the waves obey;
To whom the rivers tribute pay,
 Down the high mountains sliding;
To whom the scaly nation yields
Homage for the crystal fields
 Wherein they dwell,
And every sea-god pays a gem
Yearly out of his watery cell,
To deck great Neptune's diadem.

The Tritons, dancing in a ring
Before his palace gates, do make
The water with their echoes quake,
 Like the great thunder sounding:
The sea-nymphs chaunt their accents shrill,
And the Syrens taught to kill
 With their sweet voice,
Make every echoing rock reply,
Unto their gentle murmuring noise,
The praise of Neptune's empery.

Thomas Campion

102*

HYMN TO DIANA

Queen and Huntress, chaste and fair,
 Now the sun is laid to sleep,
 Seated in thy silver chair,
 State in wonted manner keep:
 Hesperus entreats thy light,
 Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade
 Dare itself to interpose;
 Cynthia's shining orb was made
 Heaven to clear when day did close:
 Bless us then with wished sight,
 Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart
 And thy crystal shining quiver;
 Give unto the flying hart
 Space to breathe, how short soever:
 Thou that mak'st a day of night,
 Goddess excellently bright!

Ben Jonson

103

WISHES FOR THE SUPPOSED MISTRESS

Whoe'er she be,
 That not impossible She
 That shall command my heart and me;

Where'er she lie,
 Lock'd up from mortal eye
 In shady leaves of destiny;

Till that ripe birth
Of studied Fate stand forth
And teach her fair steps tread our earth;

Till that divine
Idea take a shrine
Of crystal flesh, through which to shine:

—Meet you her, my Wishes,
Bespeak her to my blisses,
And be ye call'd, my absent kisses.

I wish her beauty
That owes not all its duty
To gaudy tire, or glist'ring shoe-tie:

Something more than
Taffata or tissue can,
Or rampant feather, or rich fan.

A face that's best
By its own beauty drest,
And can alone commend the rest:

A face made up
Out of no other shop
Than what Nature's white hand sets ope.

Sidneian showers
Of sweet discourse, whose powers
Can crown old Winter's head with flowers.

Whate'er delight
Can make day's forehead bright
Or give down to the wings of night:

Soft, silken hours,
Open suns, shady bowers;
'Bove all, nothing within that lowers;

Days that need borrow
No part of their good morrow
From a fore-spent night of sorrow:

Days, that in spite
Of darkness, by the light
Of a clear mind are day all night.

Life, that dares send
A challenge to his end,
And when it comes, say, "Welcome, friend."

I wish her store
Of worth may leave her poor
Of wishes; and I wish—no more.

Now, if Time knows
That Her, whose radiant brows
Weave them a garland of my vows:

Her that dares be
What these lines wish to see:
I seek no further, it is She.

'Tis She, and here
Lo! I unclothe and clear
My wishes' cloudy character:

Such worth as this is
Shall fix my flying wishes,
And determine them to kisses.

Let her full glory,
My fancies, fly before ye;
Be ye my fictions:—but her story.

Richard Crashaw

104*

THE GREAT ADVENTURER

Over the mountains
And over the waves,
Under the fountains
And under the graves;
Under the floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey;
Over rocks that are steepest
Love will find out the way.

Where there is no place
For the glow-worm to lie;
Where there is no space
For receipt of a fly;
Where the midge dares not venture
Lest herself fast she lay;
If love come, he will enter
And soon find out his way.

You may esteem him
A child for his might;
Or you may deem him
A coward from his flight;
But if she whom love doth honour
Be concealed from the day,
Set a thousand guards upon her,
Love will find out the way.

Some think to lose him
 By having him confined;
 And some do suppose him,
 Poor thing, to be blind;
 But if ne'er so close ye wall him,
 Do the best that you may,
 Blind love, if so ye call him,
 Will find out his way.

You may train the eagle
 To stoop to your fist;
 Or you may inveigle
 The phoenix of the east;
 The lioness, ye may move her
 To give o'er her prey;
 But you'll ne'er stop a lover:
 He will find out his way.

Unknown

105

THE PICTURE OF LITTLE T. C. IN A PROSPECT OF FLOWERS

See with what simplicity
 This nymph begins her golden days:
 In the green grass she loves to lie,
 And there with her fair aspect tames
 The wilder flowers, and gives them names;
 But only with the roses plays,
 And them does tell
 What colours best become them, and what smell.

Who can fortell for what high cause
 This darling of the Gods was born?

Yet this is she whose chaster laws
The wanton Love shall one day fear,
And, under her command severe,
See his bow broke, and ensigns torn.

Happy who can
Appease this virtuous enemy of man!

O then let me in time compound
And parley with those conquering eyes,
Ere they have tried their force to wound;
Ere with their glancing wheels they drive
In triumph over hearts that strive,
And them that yield but more despise:

Let me be laid,
Where I may see the glories from some shade.

Meantime, whilst every verdant thing
Itself does at thy beauty charm,
Reform the errors of the Spring:
Make that the tulips may have share
Of sweetness, seeing they are fair;
And roses of their thorns disarm;
But most procure
That violets may a longer age endure.

But O young beauty of the woods,
Whom Nature courts with fruits and flowers,
Gather the flowers, but spare the buds;
Lest FLORA, angry at thy crime
To kill her infants in their prime,
Should quickly make th' example yours;
And ere we see—
Nip in the blossom—all our hopes and thee.

Andrew Marvell

106

CHILD AND MAIDEN

Ah, Chloris! could I now but sit
As unconcern'd as when
Your infant beauty could beget
No happiness or pain!
When I the dawn used to admire,
And praised the coming day,
I little thought the rising fire
Would take my rest away.

Your charms in harmless childhood lay
Like metals in a mine;
Age from no face takes more away
Than youth conceal'd in thine.
But as your charms insensibly
To their perfection prest,
So love as unperceived did fly,
And center'd in my breast.

My passion with your beauty grew,
While Cupid at my heart,
Still as his mother favour'd you,
Threw a new flaming dart:
Each gloried in their wanton part;
To make a lover, he
Employ'd the utmost of his art—
To make a beauty, she.

Sir Charles Sedley

107*

CONSTANCY

I cannot change, as others do,
Though you unjustly scorn,
Since that poor swain that sighs for you,

For you alone was born:
No, Phyllis, no, your heart to move
A surer way I'll try,—
And to revenge my slighted love,
Will still love on, and die.

When, kill'd with grief, Amintas lies,
And you to mind shall call
The sighs that now unpitied rise,
The tears that vainly fall;
That welcome hour that ends his smart
Will then begin your pain,
For such a faithful tender heart
Can never break in vain.

John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester

108*

COUNSEL TO GIRLS

Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious Lamp of Heaven, the Sun,
The higher he's a-getting
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times, still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time;
And while ye may, go marry;

For having lost but once your prime,
 You may for ever tarry.

Robert Herrick

109

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
 That from the nunnery
 Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind,
 To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
 The first foe in the field;
 And with a stronger faith embrace
 A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
 As you too shall adore:
 I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
 Loved I not Honour more.

Richard Lovelace

110*

ELIZABETH OF BOHEMIA

You meaner beauties of the night,
 That poorly satisfy our eyes
 More by your number than your light,
 You common people of the skies,—
 What are you, when the Moon shall rise?

You curious chanter of the wood
 That warble forth dame Nature's lays,
 Thinking your passions understood
 By your weak accents—what's your praise
 When Philomel her voice doth raise?

You violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known,
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own,—
What are you, when the Rose is blown?

So when my Mistress shall be seen
In form and beauty of her mind,
By virtue first, then choice, a Queen,
Tell me, if she were not design'd
Th' eclipse and glory of her kind?
Sir Henry Wotton

111 TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY

Daughter to that good Earl, once President
Of England's Council and her Treasury,
Who lived in both, unstain'd with gold or fee,
And left them both, more in himself content,
Till the sad breaking of that Parliament
Broke him, as that dishonest victory
At Chaeroneia, fatal to liberty,
Kill'd with report that old man eloquent;—
Though later born than to have known the days
Wherein your father flourish'd, yet by you,
Madam, methinks I see him living yet:
So well your words his noble virtues praise,
That all both judge you to relate them true,
And to possess them, honour'd Margaret.

John Milton

112*

THE TRUE BEAUTY

He that loves a rosy cheek
Or a coral lip admires,

Or from star-like eyes doth seek
 Fuel to maintain his fires;
 As old Time makes these decay,
 So his flames must waste away.

But a smooth and steadfast mind,
 Gentle thoughts, and calm desires,
 Hearts with equal love combined,
 Kindle never-dying fires.
 Where these are not, I despise
 Lovely cheeks or lips or eyes.

Thomas Carew

113

TO DIANEME

Sweet, be not proud of those two eyes
 Which star-like sparkle in their skies;
 Nor be you proud, that you can see
 All hearts your captives—yours, yet free;
 Be you not proud of that rich hair
 Which wantons with the lovesick air:—
 Whenas that ruby which you wear,
 Sunk from the tip of your soft ear,
 Will last to be a precious stone
 When all your world of beauty's gone.

Robert Herrick

114* Love in thy youth, fair Maid; be wise;
 Old Time will make thee colder;
 And though each morning new arise,
 Yet we each day grow older.

Thou as Heaven art fair and young,
 Thine eyes like twin stars shining,
 But ere another day be sprung
 All these will be declining.

Then winter comes with all his fears,
And all thy sweets shall borrow;
Too late then wilt thou shower thy tears,—
And I too late shall sorrow!

Unknown

115

Go, lovely Rose!
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her, that's young
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired.
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee:
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

Edmund Waller

116*

TO CELIA

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;

Or leave a kiss but in the cup
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee
As giving it a hope, that there
It could not wither'd be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself but thee!

Ben Jonson

117

CHERRY-RIPE

There is a garden in her face
Where roses and white lilies blow;
A heavenly paradise is that place,
Wherein all pleasant fruits do grow;
There cherries grow that none may buy,
Till Cherry-Ripe themselves do cry.

Those cherries fairly do enclose
Of orient pearl a double row,
Which when her lovely laughter shows,
They look like rose-buds fill'd with snow;
Yet them no peer nor prince may buy,
Till Cherry-Ripe themselves do cry.

Her eyes like angels watch them still;
Her brows like bended bows do stand.

Threat'ning with piercing frowns to kill
All that approach with eye or hand
These sacred cherries to come nigh,
Till Cherry-Ripe themselves do cry!

Unknown

Get up, get up for shame! The blooming morn
Upon her wings presents the god unshorn.
See how Aurora throws her fair
Fresh-quilted colours through the air.
Get up, sweet Slug-a-bed, and see
The dew bespangling herb and tree.
Each flower has wept, and bow'd toward the east,
Above an hour since; yet you not drest,
Nay! not so much as out of bed?
When all the birds have matins said,
And sung their thankful hymns, 'tis sin,
Nay, profanation, to keep in,—
Whenas a thousand virgins on this day,
Spring, sooner than the lark, to fetch in may.

Rise; and put on your foliage, and be seen
To come forth, like the Spring-time, fresh and green
And sweet as Flora. Take no care
For jewels for your gown or hair:
Fear not; the leaves will strew
Gems in abundance upon you:
Besides, the childhood of the day has kept,
Against you come, some orient pearls unwept:
Come, and receive them while the light
Hangs on the dew-locks of the night;

And Titan on the eastern hill
Retires himself, or else stands still
Till you come forth. Wash, dress, be brief in praying:
Few beads are best, when once we go a Maying.

Come, my Corinna, come; and coming, mark
How each field turns a street; each street a park
Made green, and trimm'd with trees: see how
Devotion gives each house a bough
Or branch: Each porch, each door, ere this,
An ark, a tabernacle is,
Made up of white-thorn neatly interwove,
As if here were those cooler shades of love.
Can such delights be in the street,
And open fields, and we not see't?
Come, we'll abroad: and let's obey
The proclamation made for May,
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But, my Corinna, come, let's go a Maying.

There's not a budding boy, or girl, this day,
But is got up, and gone to bring in may.
A deal of youth, ere this, is come
Back, and with white-thorn laden home.
Some have despatch'd their cakes and cream,
Before that we have left to dream;
And some have wept, and woo'd, and plighted troth,
And chose their priest, ere we can cast off sloth;
Many a green-gown has been given,
Many a kiss, both odd and even;
Many a glance, too, has been sent
From out the eye, Love's firmament;
Many a jest told of the keys betraying
This night, and locks pick'd:—Yet we're not a Maying.

—Come, let us go, while we are in our prime,
And take the harmless folly of the time!

We shall grow old apace, and die
Before we know our liberty.

Our life is short; and our days run
As fast away as does the sun.

And as a vapour, or a drop of rain
Once lost, can ne'er be found again,

So when or you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade,
All love, all liking, all delight

Lies drown'd with us in endless night.

Then while time serves, and we are but decaying,
Come, my Corinna! come, let's go a Maying.

Robert Herrick

I

A sweet disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness:—
A lawn about the shoulders, thrown
Into a fine distraction;
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthrals the crimson stomacher;
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbands to flow confusedly;
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat;
A careless shoe-string, in whose tie
I see a wild civility:—
Do more bewitch me, than when art
Is too precise in every part.

Robert Herrick

II

- 120 When, as in silks my Julia goes,
 Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows
 That liquefaction of her clothes!

Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
That brave vibration each way free,
O how that glittering taketh me!

Robert Herrick

III

- 121* My Love in her attire doth shew her wit,
 It doth so well become her:
For every season she hath dressings fit,
 For Winter, Spring, and Summer.
No beauty she doth miss
When all her robes are on;
But Beauty's self she is
When all her robes are gone.

Unknown

122*

ON A GIRDLE

That which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples bind;
No monarch but would give his crown
His arms might do what this has done.

It was my Heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely deer;
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love
Did all within this circle move.

A narrow compass! and yet there
 Dwelt all that's good, and all that's fair.
 Give me but what this ribband bound,
 Take all the rest the Sun goes round.

Edmund Waller

E'en like two little, bank-dividing brooks,
 That wash the pebbles with their wanton streams,
 And having ranged and search'd a thousand nooks,
 Meet both at length in silver-breasted Thames,
 Where in a greater current they conjoin:
 So I my Best-Belovéd's am; so He is mine.

E'en so we met; and after long pursuit,
 E'en so we join'd; we both became entire.
 No need for either to renew a suit;
 For I was flax and He was flames of fire:
 Our firm-united souls did more than twine:
 So I my Best-Belovéd's am; so He is mine.

If all those glittering Monarchs that command
 The servile quarters of this earthly ball,
 Should tender, in exchange, their shares of land,
 I would not change my fortunes for them all.
 Their wealth is but a counter to my coin:
 The world's but theirs; but my Belovéd's mine.

Francis Quarles

124* TO ANTHERA WHO MAY COMMAND
 HIM ANY THING

Bid me to live, and I will live
 Thy Protestant to be;

Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee.

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free
As in the whole world thou canst find,
That heart I'll give to thee.

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay,
To honour thy decree;
Or bid it languish quite away,
And 't shall do so for thee.

Bid me to weep, and I will weep
While I have eyes to see;
And having none, yet I will keep
A heart to weep for thee.

Bid me despair, and I'll despair,
Under that cypress tree;
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en Death, to die for thee.

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me,
And hast command of every part,
To live and die for thee.

Robert Herrick

Love not me for comely grace,
For my pleasing eye or face,
Nor for any outward part,
No, nor for my constant heart,—

For those may fail, or turn to ill,
So thou and I shall sever.
Keep therefore a true woman's eye,
And love me still, but know not why—
So hast thou the same reason still
To dote upon me ever!

Unknown

126* Not, Celia, that I juster am
Or better than the rest;
For I would change each hour, like them,
Were not my heart at rest.

But I am tied to very thee
By every thought I have;
Thy face I only care to see,
Thy heart I only crave.

All that in woman is adored
In thy dear self I find—
For the whole sex can but afford
The handsome and the kind.

Why then should I seek further store,
And still make love anew?
When change itself can give no more,
'Tis easy to be true.

Sir Charles Sedley

When Love with unconfinéd wings
Hovers within my gates.

And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair
And fetter'd to her eye,—
The gods that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round,
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free—
Fishes that tinkle in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my King;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,—
Enlargéd winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage.
If I have freedom in my love
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

Richard Lovelace

TO LUCASTA, GOING BEYOND THE SEAS

If to be absent were to be
 Away from thee,
 Or that when I am gone
 You or I were alone,—
 Then, my Lucasta, might I crave
 Pity from blustering wind, or swallowing wave.

But I'll not sigh one blast or gale
 To swell my sail,
 Or pay a tear to 'suage
 The foaming blue-god's rage;
 For whether he will let me pass
 Or no, I'm still as happy as I was.

Though seas and land betwixt us both,
 Our faith and troth,
 Like separated souls,
 All time and space controls;
 Above the highest sphere we meet
 Unseen, unknown, and greet as Angels greet.

So then we do anticipate
 Our after-fate,
 And are alive i' the skies,
 If thus our lips and eyes
 Can speak like spirits unconfined
 In Heaven, their earthy bodies left behind.
Richard Lovelace

129* ENCOURAGEMENTS TO A LOVER

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
 Prythee, why so pale?

Will, if looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prythee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prythee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prythee, why so mute?

Quit, quit, for shame! this will not move,
This cannot take her;
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her,—
The D—l take her!

Sir John Suckling

130*

A SUPPLICATION

Awake, awake, my Lyre!
And tell thy silent master's humble tale
In sounds that may prevail:
Sounds that gentle thoughts inspire.
Though so exalted she
And I so lowly be
Tell her, such different notes make all thy harmony.

Hark, how the strings awake!
And, though the moving hand approach not near,
Themselves with awful fear
A kind of numerous trembling make.
Now all thy forces try;
Now all thy charms apply;
Revenge upon her ear the conquests of her eye.

Weak Lyre! thy virtue sure
Is useless here, since thou art only found
To cure, but not to wound,
And she to wound, but not to cure.
Too weak, too, wilt thou prove
My passion to remove;
Physic to other ills, thou'rt nourishment to Love.

Sleep, sleep again, my Lyre!
For thou canst never tell my humble tale
In sounds that will prevail,
Nor gentle thoughts in her inspire;
All thy vain mirth lay by,
Bid thy strings silent lie,
Sleep, sleep again, my Lyre, and let thy master die.
Abraham Cowley

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?
Or make pale my cheeks with care
'Cause another's rosy are?
Be she fairer than the day
Or the flowery meads in May—
If she think not well of me,
What care I how fair she be?

Shall my silly heart be pined
'Cause I see a woman kind?
Or a well disposéd nature

Joinéd with a lovely feature?
Be she meeker, kinder than
Turtle-dove or pelican—
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how kind she be?

Shall a woman's virtues move
Me to perish for her love?
Or her well-deservings known
Make me quite forget mine own?
Be she with that goodness blest
Which may merit name of Best—
 If she be not such to me,
 What care I how good she be?

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
Shall I play the fool and die?
She that bears a noble mind
If not outward helps she find,
Thinks what with them he would do
Who without them dares her woo;
 And unless that mind I see,
 What care I how great she be?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
I will ne'er the more despair;
If she love me, this believe:
I will die ere she shall grieve.
If she slight me when I woo,
I can scorn and let her go;
 For if she be not for me,
 What care I for whom she be?
 George Wither

MELANCHOLY

Hence, all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights
Wherein you spend your folly:
There's nought in this life sweet
If man were wise to see't
But only melancholy,
O sweetest Melancholy!

Welcome, folded arms, and fixé eyes,
A sigh that piercing mortifies,
A look that's fasten'd to the ground,
A tongue chain'd up without a sound!
Fountain-heads and pathless groves,
Places which pale passion loves!
Moonlight walks, when all the fowls
Are warmly housed save bats and owls!
A midnight bell, a parting groan!
These are the sounds we feed upon:
Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy valley;
Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy.
John Fletcher

FORSAKEN

O waly, waly up the bank
And waly, waly down the brae,
And waly, waly yon burn-side,
Where I and my Love went to gae!
I leant my back unto an aik,
I thought it was a trusty tree;
But first it bow'd, and syne it brak,
Sae my true Love did lightly me.

O waly, waly, but love be bonny
A little time while it is new;
But when 'tis auld, it waxeth cauld
And fades awa' like morning dew.
O wherefore should I busk my head?
Or wherefore should I kame my hair?
For my true Love has me forsook,
And says he'll never love me mair.

Now Arthur-seat sall be my bed;
The sheets shall ne'er be prest by me;
Saint Anton's well sall be my drink,
Since my true Love has forsaken me.
Marti'mas wind, when wilt thou blaw
And shake the green leaves aff the tree?
O gentle Death, when wilt thou come?
For of my life I am wearie.

'Tis not the frost, that freezes fell,
Nor blawing snaw's inclemencie;
'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry,
But my Love's heart grown cauld to me.
When we came in by Glasgow town
We were a comely sight to see:
My Love was clad in the black velvét,
And I myself in cramasie.

But had I wist, before I kist,
That love had been sae ill to win,
I had lockt my heart in a case of gowd
And pinn'd it with a siller pin.
And O! if my young babe were born,
And set upon the nurse's knee,

And I myself were dead and gane,
And the green grass growing over me!

Unknown

Upon my lap my sovereign sits
And sucks upon my breast;
Meantime his love maintains my life
And gives my sense her rest.

Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

When thou hast taken thy repast,
Repose, my babe, on me;
So may thy mother and thy nurse
Thy cradle also be.

Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

I grieve that duty doth not work
All that my wishing would,
Because I would not be to thee
But in the best I should.

Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

Yet as I am, and as I may,
I must and will be thine,
Though all too little for thy self
Vouchsafing to be mine.

Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

Unknown

135

FAIR HELEN

I wish I were where Helen lies!
 Night and day on me she cries;
 O that I were where Helen lies
 On fair Kirconnell lea!

Curst be the heart that thought the thought,
 And curst the hand that fired the shot,
 When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
 And died to succour me!

O think na but my heart was sair
 When my Love dropt down and spak nae mair!
 I laid her down wi' meikle care
 On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water-side,
 None but my foe to be my guide,
 None but my foe to be my guide,
 On fair Kirconnell lea;

I lighted down my sword to draw,
 I hackéd him in pieces sma',
 I hackéd him in pieees sma',
 For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare!
 I'll make a garland of thy hair
 Shall bind my heart for evermair—
 Until the day I die.

O that I were where Helen lies!
 Night and day on me she cries;

Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, "Haste and come to me!"

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I were blest,
Where thou lies low and takes thy rest
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn ower my een,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
Since my Love died for me.

Unknown

As I was walking all alane,
I heard twa corbies making a mane;
The tane unto the t'other say,
"Where sall we gang and dine today?"

"—In behint yon auld fail dyke,
I wot there lies a new-slain Knight;
And naebody kens that he lies there,
But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

"His hound is to the hunting gane,
His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,

His lady's ta'en another mate,
So we may mak our dinner sweet.

"Ye'll sit on his white hause-bane,
And I'll pick out his bonnie blue een;
Wi' ae lock o' his gowden hair
We'll theek our nest when it grows bare.

"Mony a one for him makes mane,
But nane sall ken where he is gane;
O'er his white banes, when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair."

Unknown

137*

ON THE DEATH OF MR. WILLIAM HERVEY

It was a dismal and a fearful night,—
Scarce could the Morn drive on th' unwilling light,
When sleep, death's image, left my troubled breast,
By something liker death possest.
My eyes with tears did uncommanded flow,
And on my soul hung the dull weight
Of some intolerable fate.
What bell was that? Ah me! Too much I know!

My sweet companion and my gentle peer,
Why hast thou left me thus unkindly here,
Thy end for ever, and my life, to moan?
O thou hast left me all alone!
Thy soul and body, when death's agony
Besieged around thy noble heart,
Did not with more reluctance part
Than I, my dearest friend, do part from thee.

Ye fields of Cambridge, our dear Cambridge, say,
Have ye not seen us, walking every day?

Was there a tree about which did not know

The love betwixt us two?

Henceforth, ye gentle trees, for ever fade,

Or your sad branches thicker join,

And into darksome shades combine,

Dark as the grave wherein my friend is laid.

Large was his soul: as large a soul as e'er

Submitted to inform a body here;

High as the place 'twas shortly in Heaven to have,

But low and humble as his grave:

So high that all the virtues there did come

As to the chiefest seat

Conspicuous, and great;

So low that for me too it made a room.

Knowledge he only sought, and so soon caught,

As if for him knowledge had rather sought;

Nor did more learning ever crowded lie

In such a short mortality.

Whene'er the skilful youth discoursed or writ,

Still did the notions throng

About his eloquent tongue;

Nor could his ink flow faster than his wit.

His mirth was the pure spirits of various wit,

Yet never did his God or friends forget;

And when deep talk and wisdom came in view,

Retired, and gave to them their due.

For the rich help of books he always took,

Though his own searching mind before

Was so with notions written o'er

As if wise Nature had made that her book.

With as much zeal, devotion, piety,
He always lived, as other saints do die.
Still with his soul severe account he kept,
 Weeping all debts out ere he slept.
Then down in peace and innocence he lay,
 Like the sun's laborious light,
 Which still in water sets at night,
Unsullied with his journey of the day.

Abraham Cowley

138

FRIENDS IN PARADISE

They are all gone into the world of light!
 And I alone sit lingering here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
 And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
 Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest
 After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
 Whose light doth trample on my days:
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
 Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope! and high Humility,
 High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and you have show'd them me,
 To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous Death! the jewel of the just,
 Shining nowhere, but in the dark;

What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
 Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know
 At first sight, if the bird be flown;
But what fair well or grove he sings in now,
 That is to him unknown.

And yet, as Angels in some brighter dreams
 Call to the soul, when man doth sleep;
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
 And into glory peep.

Henry Vaughan

Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,
 Why do ye fall so fast?
 Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here awhile
 To blush and gently smile,
 And go at last.

What! were ye born to be
 An hour or half's delight,
 And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth
 Merely to show your worth,
 And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
 May read how soon things have
 Their end, though ne'er so brave;

And after they have shown their pride,
Like you, awhile, they glide
Into the grave.

Robert Herrick

140*

TO DAFFODILS

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising Sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay as you,
We have as short a Spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay
As you, or any thing.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away
Like to the Summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew
Ne'er to be found again.

Robert Herrick

141*

THE GIRL DESCRIBES HER FAWN

With sweetest milk and sugar first
I it at my own fingers nursed;
And as it grew, so every day

It wax'd more white and sweet than they.
It had so sweet a breath! and oft
I blush'd to see its foot more soft
And white,—shall I say,—than my hand?
Nay, any lady's of the land!

It is a wondrous thing how fleet
'Twas on those little silver feet:
With what a pretty skipping grace
It oft would challenge me the race;
And when 't had left me far away,
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay;
For it was nimbler much than hinds,
And trod as if on the four winds.

I have a garden of my own,
But so with roses overgrown
And lilies, that you would it guess
To be a little wilderness;
And all the spring-time of the year
It only lovéd to be there.
Among the beds of lilies I
Have sought it oft, where it should lie;
Yet could not, till itself would rise,
Find it, although before mine eyes;
For in the flaxen lilies' shade
It like a bank of lilies laid.

Upon the roses it would feed,
Until its lips e'en seem'd to bleed;
And then to me 'twould boldly trip,
And print those roses on my lip.
But all its chief delight was still
On roses thus itself to fill,

And its pure virgin limbs to fold
In whitest sheets of lilies cold.
Had it lived long, it would have been
Lilies without, roses within.

Andrew Marvell

142

THOUGHTS IN A GARDEN

How vainly men themselves amaze
To win the palm, the oak, or bays,
And their uncessant labours see
Crown'd from some single herb or tree,
Whose short and narrow-vergéd shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid;
While all the flowers and trees do close
To weave the garlands of Repose.

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear!
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men.
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow.
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
So amorous as this lovely green.
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name.
Little, alas, they know or heed
How far these beauties hers exceed!
Fair trees! wheres'e'er your barks I wound,
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passions' heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat.
The gods, who mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race:
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might laurel grow;
And Pan did after Syrinx speed
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less
Withdraws into its happiness:
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside
My soul into the boughs does glide;
There like a bird, it sits and sings,
Then whets and claps its silver wings,
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy Garden-state
While man there walk'd without a mate;
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet?
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two paradises 'twere in one,
To live in Paradise alone.

How well the skilful gardener drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new!
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run;
And, as it works, th' industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers?

Andrew Marvell

143*

FORTUNATI NIMIUM

Jack and Joan, they think no ill,
But loving live, and merry still:
Do their week-day's work, and pray
Devoutly on the holy-day;
Skip and trip it on the green,
And help to choose the Summer Queen;
Lash out at a country feast
Their silver penny with the best.

Well can they judge of nappy ale,
And tell at large a winter tale;
Climb up to the apple loft,

And turn the crabs till they be soft.
 Tib is all the father's joy.
 And little Tom the mother's boy.
 All their pleasure is, Content,
 And care, to pay their yearly rent.

Joan can call by name her cows
 And deck her windows with green boughs;
 She can wreaths and tutties make,
 And trim with plums a bridal cake.
 Jack knows what brings gain or loss,
 And his long flail can stoutly toss;
 Makes the hedge which others break,
 And ever thinks what he doth speak.

—Now, you courtly dames and knights,
 That study only strange delights,
 Though you scorn the homespun gray,
 And revel in your rich array,
 Though your tongues dissemble deep
 And can your heads from danger keep:—
 Yet, for all your pomp and train,
 Securer lives the silly swain!

Thomas Campion

Hence, loathéd Melancholy,
 Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born
 In Stygian cave forlorn
 'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights
 unholy!
 Find out some uncouth cell

Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous
wings
And the night-raven sings :
There under ebon shades, and low-brow'd
rocks
As ragged as thy locks,
10 In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.

But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crownéd Bacchus bore ;
Or whether, as some sager sing,
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
20 As he met her once a-Maying—
There on beds of violets blue
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew
Fill'd her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful jollity,
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathéd smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
30 And love to live in dimple sleek ;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides :—
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe ;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty.

- And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee
40 In unprovéd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight
And singing startle the dull night
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow
Through the sweetbriar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine;
While the cock with lively din
50 Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before.
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
60 Where the great Sun begins his state
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
70 Whilst the landscape round it measures:

Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim, with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some Beauty lies,
80 The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.

Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis, met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
90 To the tann'd haycock in the mead.

Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequer'd shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sun-shine holiday,
Till the live-long day-light fail;
100 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab the junkets eat:—
She was pinch'd and pull'd, she said;
And he, by Friar's lantern led;

Tells how the drudging Goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn
That ten day-labourers could not end,
110 Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.

Tower'd cities please us then
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
120 In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry ;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
130 On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

And ever against eating cares
Lap me in soft Lydian airs
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce

In notes, with many a winding bout
 140 Of linkéd sweetness long drawn out;
 With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
 The melting voice through mazes running,
 Untwisting all the chains that tie
 The hidden soul of harmony;
 That Orpheus' self may heave his head
 From golden slumber, on a bed
 Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto, to have quite set free
 150 His half-regain'd Eurydice.

These delights if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

John Milton

145

IL PENSEROSO

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
 The brood of Folly without father bred!
 How little you bestead
 Or fill the fixéd mind with all your toys!
 Dwell in some idle brain,
 And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
 As thick and numberless
 As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
 Or likest hovering dreams,
 10 The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.

But hail, thou goddess sage and holy,
 Hail, divinest Melancholy!
 Whose saintly visage is too bright

To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue:
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
20 To set her beauty's praise above
The sea-nymphs, and their powers offended.
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-hair'd Vesta, long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she (in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain).
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
30 While yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of Cipres lawn
Over thy decent shoulders drawn;
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
40 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad, leaden, downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,

And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing.
And add to these retiréd Leisure
50 That in trim gardens takes his pleasure.
But first and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing
Guiding the fiery-wheeléd throne,
The cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest saddest plight
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
60 Gently o'er the accustom'd oak.
—Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering Moon
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
70 Through the heaven's wide pathless way,
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground
I hear the far-off Curfew sound
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removéd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room

80 Teach light to counterfeit a gloom:
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.

Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
90 What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshy nook;
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
100 Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what, though rare, of later age
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.

But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musaeus from his bower,
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek
And made Hell grant what Love did seek!
Or call up him that left half-told
110 The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canacé to wife

That own'd the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride.
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
120 Where more is meant than meets the ear.

Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not trick'd and frownc'd as she was wont
With the Attie Boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves

130 With minute drops from off the eaves.
And when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
To archéd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe, with heavéd stroke,
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,

140 Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honey'd thigh
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,

Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
150 Softly on my eyelids laid;
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.

But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high-embow'd roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight
160 Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voiced quire below
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.

And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell
170 Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.

These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

John Milton

SONG OF THE EMIGRANTS IN BERMUDA

Where the remote Bermudas ride
In the ocean's bosom unespied,
From a small boat that row'd along
The listening winds received this song:

"What should we do but sing His praise
That led us through the watery maze,
Where He the huge sea-monsters wracks,
That lift the deep upon their backs,
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own?
He lands us on a grassy stage,
Safe from the storms, and prelate's rage:
He gave us this eternal Spring
Which here enamels everything,
And sends the fowls to us in care
On daily visits through the air.
He hangs in shades the orange bright
Like golden lamps in a green night,
And does in the pomegranates close
Jewels more rich than Ormus shows.
He makes the figs our mouths to meet
And throws the melons at our feet;
But apples, plants of such a price,
No tree could ever bear them twice.
With cedars chosen by His hand
From Lebanon He stores the land;
And makes the hollow seas that roar
Proclaim the ambergris on shore.
He cast (of which we rather boast)
The Gospel's pearl upon our coast;

And in these rocks for us did frame
A temple where to sound His name.
Oh! let our voice His praise exalt
Till it arrive at Heaven's vault,
Which thence, perhaps, rebounding may
Echo beyond the Mexique bay!"

Thus sung they in the English boat
A holy and a cheerful note;
And all the way, to guide their chime,
With falling oars they kept the time.

Andrew Marvell

Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious Sisters, Voice and Verse!
Wed your divine sounds, and mixt power employ,
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce;
And to our high-raised phantasy present
That undisturbéd Song of pure conceit,
Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
 To Him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout and solemn jubilee;
Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow;
And the Cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
 Hymns devout and holy psalms
 Singing everlastingly:
That we on Earth, with undiscording voice
May rightly answer that melodious noise;

As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
Jarr'd against nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
O may we soon again renew that Song,
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
To His celestial consort us unite,
To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light!

John Milton

148* NOX NOCTI INDICAT SCIENTIAM

When I survey the bright
Celestial sphere,
So rich with jewels hung, that night
Doth like an Ethiop bride appear,

My soul her wings doth spread,
And heaven-ward flies,
The Almighty's mysteries to read
In the large volumes of the skies.

For the bright firmament
Shoots forth no flame
So silent but is eloquent
In speaking the Creator's name.

No unregarded star
Contracts its light
Into so small a character,
Removed far from our human sight,

But if we steadfast look,
We shall discern
In it as in some holy book,
How man may heavenly knowledge learn.

It tells the Conqueror,
That far-stretch'd power
Which his proud dangers traffic for
Is but the triumph of an hour,

That from the farthest North
Some nation may,
Yet undiscover'd, issue forth,
And o'er his new-got conquest sway:

Some nation yet shut in
With hills of ice,
May be let out to scourge his sin,
Till they shall equal him in vice.

And then they likewise shall
Their ruin have;
For as yourselves your Empires fall,
And every Kingdom hath a grave.

Thus those celestial fires,
Though seeming mute,
The fallacy of our desires
And all the pride of life, confute.

For they have watch'd since first
The world had birth:
And found sin in itself accursed,
And nothing permanent on earth.

William Habington

149*

HYMN TO DARKNESS

Hail thou most sacred venerable thing!

What Muse is worthy thee to sing?

Thee, from whose pregnant universal womb

All things, ev'n Light, thy rival, first did come.

What dares he not attempt that sings of thee,

Thou first and greatest mystery?

Who can the secrets of thy essence tell?

Thou, like the light of God, art inaccessible.

Before great Love this monument did raise,

This ample theatre of praise,

Before the folding circles of the sky

Were tuned by Him, Who is all harmony,

Before the morning Stars their hymn began,

Before the council held for man,

Before the birth of either time or place,—

Thou reign'st unquestion'd monarch in the empty space.

Thy native lot thou didst to Light resign,

But still half of the globe is thine.

Here with a quiet, but yet awful hand,

Like the best emperors thou dost command.

To thee the stars above their brightness owe,

And mortals their repose below;

To thy protection fear and sorrow flee,

And those that weary are of light, find rest in thee.

John Norris of Bemerton

150*

A VISION

I saw Eternity the other night,

Like a great ring of pure and endless light,

All calm, as it was bright;

And round beneath it, Time, in hours, days, years,
Driven by the spheres,
Like a vast shadow moved, in which the World
And all her train were hurl'd.

Henry Vaughan

151

ALEXANDER'S FEAST, OR, THE POWER OF
MUSIC

'Twas at the royal feast for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son.
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne;
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound,
(So should desert in arms be crown'd).
The lovely Thais by his side
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride
In flower of youth and beauty's pride:—
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave
None but the brave
None but the brave deserves the fair!

Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful quire,
With flying fingers touch'd the lyre;
The trembling notes ascend the sky
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove
Who left his blissful seats above—
Such is the power of mighty love!

A dragon's fiery form belied the god;
Sublime on radiant spires he rode
When he to fair Olympia prest,
And while he sought her snowy breast,
Then round her slender waist he curl'd,
And stamp'd an image of himself, a sovereign of the
world.

—The listening crowd admire the lofty sound;
“A present deity!” they shout around;
“A present deity!” the vaulted roofs rebound.
With ravish'd ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god;
Affects to nod
And seems to shake the spheres.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young:
“The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums!
Flush'd with a purple grace
He shows his honest face:
Now give the hautboys breath; he comes, he comes!
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.”

Soothed with the sound, the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again,
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew
the slain!

The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And while he Heaven and Earth defied
Changed his hand and check'd his pride.
He chose a mournful Muse
Soft pity to infuse:
He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood;
Deserted at his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed;
On the bare earth exposed he lies
With not a friend to close his eyes.
—With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his alter'd soul
The various turns of Chance below;
And now and then a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree;
'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
“War,” he sung, “is toil and trouble,
Honour but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying;
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think, it worth enjoying:
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,

Take the good the gods provide thee!"
—The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So love was crown'd, but Music won the cause.
The princee, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the Fair
Who caused his care,
And sigh'd and look'd, sigh'd and look'd,
Sigh'd and look'd, and sigh'd again;
At length with love and wine at once opprest
The vanquish'd victor sunk upon her breast.

Now strike the golden lyre again;
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain!
Break his bands of sleep asunder
And rouse him like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark! hark! the horrid sound
Has raised up his head:
As awaked from the dead
And amazed he stares around.
"Revenge, revenge," Timotheus cries,
"See the Furies arise!
See the snakes that they rear
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Greecian ghosts, that in battle were slain
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew!
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes
And glittering temples of their hostile gods."

—The princes applaud with a furious joy:
And the King seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way
To light him to his prey,
And like another Helen, fired another Troy!

—Thus, long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learn'd to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast from her sacred store
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
—Let old Timotheus yield the prize
Or both divide the crown:
He raised a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down!

John Dryden

BOOK THREE

152 ODE ON THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM VICISSITUDE

Now the golden Morn aloft
Waves her dew-bespangled wing;
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
She woos the tardy Spring:
Till April starts, and calls around
The sleeping fragrance from the ground,
And lightly o'er the living scene
Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,
Frisking ply their feeble feet;
Forgetful of their wintry trance,
The birds his presence greet:
But chief, the sky-lark warbles high
His trembling thrilling ecstacy,
And lessening from the dazzled sight,
Melts into air and liquid light.

Yesterday the sullen year
Saw the snowy whirlwind fly;
Mute was the music of the air,
The herd stood drooping by.
Their raptures now that wildly flow
No yesterday nor morrow know;
'Tis Man alone that joy describes
With forward and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past misfortune's brow
Soft reflection's hand can trace,

And o'er the cheek of sorrow throw
A melancholy grace;
While hope prolongs our happier hour,
Or deepest shades, that dimly lour
And blacken round our weary way,
Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still where rosy pleasure leads,
See a kindred grief pursue;
Behind the steps that misery treads
Approaching comfort view;
The hues of bliss more brightly glow
Chastised by sabler tints of woe,
And, blended, form, with artful strife,
The strength and harmony of life.

See the wretch that long has tost
On the thorny bed of pain,
At length repair his vigour lost
And breathe and walk again:
The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening Paradise.

Thomas Gray

O Thou, by Nature taught
To breathe her genuine thought
In numbers warmly pure, and sweetly strong;
Who first, on mountains wild,
In Fancy, loveliest child,
Thy babe, or Pleasure's, nursed the powers of song!

Thou, who with hermit heart,
Disdain'st the wealth of art,
And gauds, and pageant weeds, and trailing pall,
But com'st, a decent maid
In Attic robe array'd,—
O chaste, unboastful Nymph, to thee I call!

By all the honey'd store
On Hybla's thymy shore,
By all her blooms and mingled murmurs dear;
By her whose love-lorn woe
In evening musings slow
Soothed sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear;

By old Cephisus deep,
Who spread his wavy sweep
In warbled wanderings round thy green retreat;
On whose enamell'd side,
When holy Freedom died,
No equal haunt allured thy future feet:—

O sister meek of Truth,
To my admiring youth
Thy sober aid and native charms infuse!
The flowers that sweetest breathe,
Though Beauty cull'd the wreath,
Still ask thy hand to range their order'd hues.

While Rome could none esteem
But Virtue's patriot theme,
You loved her hills, and led her laureat band;
But stay'd to sing alone
To one distinguish'd throne;
And turn'd thy face, and fled her alter'd land.

No more, in hall or bower,
The Passions own thy power;
Love, only Love, her forceless numbers mean:
For thou hast left her shrine;
Nor olive more, nor vine,
Shall gain thy feet to bless the servile scene.

Though taste, though genius bless
To some divine excess,
Faints the cold work till thou inspire the whole;
What each, what all supply
May court, may charm our eye;
Thou, only thou, canst raise the meeting soul!

Of these let others ask
To aid some mighty task;
I only seek to find thy temperate vale,
Where oft my reed might sound
To maids and shepherds round,
And all thy sons, O Nature! learn my tale.

William Collins

Happy the man, whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
In his own ground;

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire;
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter, fire;

Blest, who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years, slide soft away
In health of body, peace of mind,
 Quiet by day,

Sound sleep by night; study and ease
Together mixt, sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please,
 With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me die;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
 Tell where I lie.

Alexander Pope

155*

THE BLIND BOY

O say what is that thing call'd Light,
 Which I must ne'er enjoy;
What are the blessings of the sight?
 O tell your poor blind boy!

You talk of wondrous things you see,
 You say the sun shines bright;
I feel him warm, but how can he
 Or make it day or night?

My day or night myself I make
 When'er I sleep or play;
And could I ever keep awake
 With me 'twere always day.

With heavy sighs I often hear
You mourn my hapless woe;
But sure with patience I can bear
A loss I ne'er can know.

Then let not what I cannot have
My cheer of mind destroy:
Whilst thus I sing, I am a king,
Although a poor blind boy.

Colley Cibber

ON A FAVORITE CAT, DROWNED IN A TUB OF
GOLD FISHES

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow,
Demurest of the tabby kind
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared:
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes—
She saw and purr'd applause.

Still had she gazed, but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream;

Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue,
Though richest purple, to the view
Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first, and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish,
She stretch'd, in vain, to reach the prize—
What female heart can gold despise?—
What Cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between—
Malignant Fate sat by and smiled—
The slippery verge her feet beguiled:
She tumbled headlong in!

Eight times emerging from the flood,
She mew'd to every watery God
Some speedy aid to send:—
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd,
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard—
A favorite has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties! undeceived,
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold:
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize,
Nor all that glitters, gold!

Thomas Gray

TO CHARLOTTE PULTENEY

Timely blossom, Infant fair,
Fondling of a happy pair,
Every morn and every night
Their solicitous delight,
Sleeping, waking, still at ease,
Pleasing, without skill to please;
Little gossip, blithe and hale,
Tattling many a broken tale,
Singing many a tuneless song,
Lavish of a heedless tongue;
Simple maiden, void of art,
Babbling out the very heart,
Yet abandon'd to thy will,
Yet imagining no ill,
Yet too innocent to blush;
Like the linnet in the bush
To the mother-linnet's note
Moduling her slender throat,
Chirping forth thy petty joys;
Wanton in the change of toys,
Like the linnet green, in May
Flitting to each bloomy spray;
Wearied then and glad of rest,
Like the linnet in the nest:—
This, thy present happy lot,
This in time will be forgot:
Other pleasures, other cares,
Ever-busy Time prepares;
And thou shalt in thy daughter see,
This picture once resembled thee.

Ambrose Philips

158*

RULE BRITANNIA

When Britain first at Heaven's command
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of her land,
And guardian angels sung the strain:
Rule, Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!
Britons never shall be slaves.

The nations not so blest as thee
Must in their turn to tyrants fall,
Whilst thou shalt flourish, great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
And work their woe and thy renown.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine!

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair;
Blest Isle, with matchless beauty crown'd
And manly hearts to guard the fair:—

Rule, Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!
Britons never shall be slaves!

James Thomson

159

THE BARD

Pindaric Ode

“Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait
Tho’ fann’d by Conquest’s crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk’s twisted mail,
Nor e’en thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria’s curse, from Cambria’s tears!”
—Such were the sounds that o’er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scatter’d wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon’s shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array:—
Stout Glo’ster stood aghast in speechless trance;
“To arms!” cried Mortimer, and couch’d his quivering
lance.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o’er old Conway’s foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the Poet stood;
(Loose, his beard and hoary hair
Stream’d like a meteor to the troubled air)
And with a masters’ hand and prophet’s fire
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre:
“Hark, how each giant-oak and desert-cave
Sighs to the torrent’s awful voice beneath!

O'er thee, oh King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

“Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hush'd the stormy main;
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed;
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topt head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie
Smear'd with gore and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof the affrighted ravens sail;
The famish'd eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries—
No more I weep; They do not sleep;
On yonder cliffs, a griesly band,
I see them sit; They linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

“*Weave the warp and weave the woof,
The winding sheet of Edward's race;
Give ample room and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death thro' Berkley's roof that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing king!*

*She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs,
The scourage of heaven! What terrors round him
wait!*

*Amazement in his van, with flight combined,
And sorrow's faded form, and solitude behind.*

*'Mighty victor, mighty lord,
Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable warrior fled?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm that in thy noon-tide beam were born?
—Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the Morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes:
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm:
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That hush'd in grim repose expects his evening prey.*

*'Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare;
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
Long years of havock urge their destined course,
And thro' the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,*

*With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
 Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
 And spare the meek usurper's holy head!
 Above, below, the rose of snow,
 Twined with her blushing foe, we spread:
 The bristled boar in infant-gore
 Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
 Now, brothers, bending o'er the accursed loom,
 Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.*

*'Edward, lo! to sudden fate
 (Weave we the woof; The thread is spun;)
 Half of thy heart we consecrate.
 (The web is wove; The work is done.)'*
 —Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
 Leave me unblest'd, unpitied, here to mourn:
 In yon bright track that fires the western skies
 They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
 But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height,
 Descending slow, their glittering skirts unroll?
 Visions of glory, spare my aching sight,
 Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
 No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail:—
 All hail, ye genuine kings! Britannia's issue, hail!

“Girt with many a baron bold,
 Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
 And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old
 In bearded majesty, appear.
 In the midst a form divine!
 Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line,
 Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face
 Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.

What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
 What strains of vocal transport round her play!
 Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear;
 They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
 Bright Rapture calls, and, soaring as she sings,
 Waves in the eye of heaven her many-colour'd wings.

“The verse adorn again

Fierce war, and faithful love,
 And truth severe by fairy fiction drest.

In buskin'd measures move
 Pale grief, and pleasing pain,
 With horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.

A voice as of the cherub-choir

Gales from blooming Eden bear,
 And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
 That, lost in long futurity, expire.
 Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud
 Raised by thy breath, has quench'd the orb of day?
 To-morrow he repairs the golden flood
 And warms the nations with redoubled ray.

Enough for me: with joy I see

The different doom our fates assign:
 Be thine despair and sceptred care,
 To triumph and to die are mine.”

—He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
 Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

Thomas Gray.

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest
 By all their country's wishes blest!
 When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,

Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung:
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

William Collins

161*

LAMENT FOR CULLODEN

The lovely lass o' Inverness,
Nae joy nor pleasure can she see;
For e'en and morn she cries, "Alas!"
And aye the saut tear blins her ee:
"Drumossie moor—Drumossie day—
A waefu' day it was to me!
For there I lost my father dear,
My father dear, and brethren three.

"Their winding-sheet the bluidy clay,
Their graves are growing green to see;
And by them lies the dearest lad
That ever blest a woman's ee!
Now wae to thee, thou cruel lord,
A bluidy man I trow thou be;
For mony a heart thou hast made sair
That ne'er did wrang to thine or thee."

Robert Burns

LAMENT FOR FLODDEN

I've heard them lilting at our ewe-milking,
Lasses a' lilting before dawn o' day;
But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At bughts, in the morning, nae blythe lads are scorning,
Lasses are lonely and dowie and wae;
Nae daffin', nae gabbin', but sighing and sabbing,
Ilk ane lifts her leglin and hies her away.

In har'st, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,
Bandsters are lyart, and runkled, and gray;
At fair or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleecching—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At e'en, in the gloaming, nae youngers are roaming
'Bout stacks wi' the lasses at bogle to play;
But ilk ane sits drearie, lamenting her dearie—
The Flowers of the Forest are weded away.

Dool and wae for the order, sent our lads to the Border!
The English, for ance, by guile wan the day;
The Flowers of the Forest, that fought aye the fore-
most,
The prime of our land, are cauld in the clay.

We'll hear nae mair lilting at the ewe-milking;
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Jane Elliott

163*

THE BRAES OF YARROW

“Thy braes were bonny, Yarrow stream,
When first on them I met my lover;
Thy braes how dreary, Yarrow stream,
When now thy waves his body cover!
For ever now, O Yarrow stream!
Thou art to me a stream of sorrow;
For never on thy banks shall I
Behold my Love, the flower of Yarrow!

“He promised me a milk-white steed
To bear me to his father’s bowers;
He promised me a little page
To squire me to his father’s towers;
He promised me a wedding ring,—
The wedding-day was fix’d to-morrow;—
Now he is wedded to his grave,
Alas, his watery grave, in Yarrow!

“Sweet were his words when last we met;
My passion I as freely told him;
Clasp’d in his arms, I little thought
That I should never more behold him;
Scarcely was he gone, I saw his ghost;
It vanish’d with a shriek of sorrow;
Thrice did the water-wraith ascend,
And gave a doleful groan thro’ Yarrow.

“His mother from the window look’d
With all the longing of a mother;
His little sister weeping walk’d
The green-wood path to meet her brother;
They sought him east, they sought him west,

They sought him all the forest thorough;
They only saw the cloud of night,
They only heard the roar of Yarrow.

“No longer from thy window look—
Thou hast no son, thou tender mother!
No longer walk, thou lovely maid;
Alas, thou hast no more a brother!
No longer seek him east or west
And search no more the forest thorough;
For, wandering in the night so dark,
He fell a lifeless corpse in Yarrow.

“The tear shall never leave my cheek,
No other youth shall be my marrow—
I’ll seek thy body in the stream,
And then with thee I’ll sleep in Yarrow.”
—The tear did never leave her cheek,
No other youth became her marrow;
She found his body in the stream,
And now with him she sleeps in Yarrow.

John Logan

164* WILLY DROWNED IN YARROW

Down in yon garden sweet and gay
Where bonnie grows the lily,
I heard a fair maid sighing say,
“My wish be wi’ sweet Willie!

“Willie’s rare, and Willie’s fair,
And Willie’s wondrous bonny;
And Willie hecht to marry me
Gin e’er he married ony.

“O gentle wind, that bloweth south
From where my Love repaireth,
Convey a kiss frae his dear mouth
And tell me how he fareth!

“O tell sweet Willie to come down
And hear the mavis singing,
And see the birds on ilka bush
And leaves around them hinging.

“The lav’rock there, wi’ her white breast
And gentle throat sae narrow;
There’s sport eneuch for gentlemen
On Leader haughs and Yarrow.

“O Leader haughs are wide and braid
And Yarrow haughs are bonny;
There Willie hecht to marry me
If e’er he married ony.

“But Willie’s gone, whom I thought on,
And does not hear me weeping;
Draws many a tear frae true love’s e’e
When other maids are sleeping.

“Yestreen I made my bed fu’ braid,
The night I’ll mak’ it narrow,
For a’ the live-lang winter night
I lie twined o’ my marrow.

“O came ye by yon water-side?
Pou’d you the rose or lily?
Or came you by yon meadow green,
Or saw you my sweet Willie?”

She sought him up, she sought him down,
She sought him braid and narrow;
Syne, in the cleaving of a craig,
She found him drown'd in Yarrow!
Unknown

LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE

Toll for the Brave!
The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave
Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel
And laid her on her side.

A land-breeze shook the shrouds
And she was overset;
Down went the Royal George,
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought,
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak,
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath,
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

—Weigh the vessel up
Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with our cup
The tears that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again,
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

William Cowper

166*

BLACK-EYED SUSAN

All in the Downs the fleet was moor'd,
The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-eyed Susan came aboard;
“O! where shall I my true-love find?
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true
If my sweet William sails among the crew.”

William, who high upon the yard
Rock'd with the billow to and fro,
Soon as her well-known voice he heard
He sigh'd, and cast his eyes below:

The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands
And quick as lightning on the deck he stands.

So the sweet lark, high poised in air,
Shuts close his pinions to his breast
If chance his mate's shrill call he hear,
And drops at once into her nest:—
The noblest captain in the British fleet
Might envy William's lip those kisses sweet.

“O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,
My vows shall ever true remain;
Let me kiss off that falling tear;
We only part to meet again.
Change as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be
The faithful compass that still points to thee.

“Believe not what the landmen say
Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind;
They'll tell thee, sailors, when away,
In every port a mistress find:
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
For Thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

“If to fair India's coast we sail,
Thy eyes are seen in diamonds bright;
Thy breath is Afric's spicy gale,
Thy skin is ivory so white:
Thus every beauteous object that I view
Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

“Though battle call me from thy arms
Let not my pretty Susan mourn;
Though cannons roar, yet safe from harms
William shall to his Dear return.

Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye."

The boatswain gave the dreadful word,
The sails their swelling bosom spread,
No longer must she stay aboard;
They kiss'd, she sigh'd, he hung his head.
Her lessening boat unwilling rows to land;
"Adieu!" she cries; and waved her lily hand.
John Gay

167*

SALLY IN OUR ALLEY

Of all the girls that are so smart
There's none like pretty Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.
There is no lady in the land
Is half so sweet as Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Her father he makes cabbage-nets
And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells laces long
To such as please to buy 'em.
But sure such folks could ne'er beget
So sweet a girl as Sally!
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When she is by, I leave my work,
I love her so sincerely;

My master comes like any Turk,
And bangs me most severely—
But let him bang his bellyful,
I'll bear it all for Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Of all the days that's in the week
I dearly love but one day—
And that's the day that comes betwixt
A Saturday and Monday;
For then I'm drest all in my best
To walk abroad with Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master carries me to church,
And often am I blaméd
Because I leave him in the lurch
As soon as text is naméd;
I leave the church in sermon-time
And slink away to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When Christmas comes about again
O then I shall have money;
I'll hoard it up, and box it all,
I'll give it to my honey;
I would it were ten thousand pound,
I'd give it all to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master and the neighbours all
 Make game of me and Sally,
 And, but for her, I'd better be
 A slave and row a galley;
 But when my seven long years are out
 O then I'll marry Sally,—
 O then we'll wed, and then we'll bed. . .
 But not in our alley!

Henry Carey

168*

A FAREWELL

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
 An' fill it in a silver tassie,
 That I may drink before I go
 A service to my bonnie lassie.
 The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith,
 Fu' loud the wind blows frae the ferry,
 The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
 And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
 The glittering spears are rankéd ready;
 The shouts o' war are heard afar,
 The battle closes thick and bloody;
 But it's not the roar o' sea or shore
 Wad make me langer wish to tarry;
 Nor shout o' war that's heard afar—
 It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary.

Robert Burns

169 If doughty deeds my lady please,
 Right soon I'll mount my steed;

And strong his arm, and fast his seat
That bears frae me the meed.

I'll wear thy colours in my cap,
Thy picture at my heart;

And he that bends not to thine eye
Shall rue it to his smart!

Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!

For thy dear sake, nae care I'll take
Tho' ne'er another trow me.

If gay attire delight thine eye,
I'll dight me in array;

I'll tend thy chamber door all night,
And squire thee all the day.

If sweetest sounds can win thine ear,
These sounds I'll strive to catch;

Thy voice I'll steal to woo thysell,
That voice that nane can match.

But if fond love thy heart can gain,
I never broke a vow;

Nae maiden lays her skaith to me,
I never loved but you.

For you alone I ride the ring,
For you I wear the blue,

For you alone I strive to sing,
O tell me how to woo!

Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!

For thy dear sake, nae care I'll take,
Tho' ne'er another trow me.

Robert Graham of Gartmore

170

TO A YOUNG LADY

Sweet stream, that winds through yonder glade,
Apt emblem of a virtuous maid—
Silent and chaste she steals along,
Far from the world's gay busy throng;
With gentle yet prevailing force,
Intent upon her destined course;
Graceful and useful all she does,
Blessing and blest where'er she goes;
Pure-bosom'd as that watery glass,
And Heaven reflected in her face.

William Cowper

171*

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

Sleep on, and dream of Heaven awhile—
Tho' shut so close thy laughing eyes,
Thy rosy lips still wear a smile
And move, and breathe delicious sighs!

Ah, now soft blushes tinge her cheeks
And mantle o'er her neck of snow;
Ah, now she murmurs, now she speaks
What most I wish—and fear to know!

She starts, she trembles, and she weeps!
Her fair hands folded on her breast:
—And now, how like a saint she sleeps!
A seraph in the realms of rest!

Sleep on secure! Above controul
Thy thoughts belong to Heaven and thee:

And may the secret of thy soul
Remain within its sanctuary!

Samuel Rogers

172* For ever, Fortune, wilt thou prove
An unrelenting foe to Love,
And when we meet a mutual heart
Come in between, and bid us part?

Bid us sigh on from day to day,
And wish and wish the soul away,
Till youth and genial years are flown,
And all the life of life is gone?

But busy, busy still art thou,
To bind the loveless, joyless vow,
The heart from pleasure to delude,
To join the gentle to the rude.

For once, O Fortune, hear my prayer,
And I absolve thy future care:
All other blessings I resign,
Make but the dear Amanda mine.

James Thomson

173 The merchant, to secure his treasure,
Conveys it in a borrow'd name:
Euphelia serves to grace my measure,
But Cloë is my real flame.

My softest verse, my darling lyre
Upon Euphelia's toilet lay—
When Cloë noted her desire
That I should sing, that I should play.

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise,
 But with my numbers mix my sighs;
 And whilst I sing Euphelia's praise,
 I fix my soul on Cloë's eyes.

Fair Cloë blush'd; Euphelia frown'd;
 I sung, and gazed; I play'd, and trembled;
 And Venus to the Loves around
 Remark'd how ill we all dissembled.

Matthew Prior

174

LOVE'S SECRET

Never seek to tell thy love,
 Love that never told can be;
 For the gentle wind doth move
 Silently, invisibly.

I told my love, I told my love,
 I told her all my heart;
 Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears:—
 Ah! she did depart.

Soon after she was gone from me
 A traveller came by,
 Silently, invisibly:
 He took her with a sigh.

William Blake

175*

When lovely woman stoops to folly
 And finds too late that men betray,—
 What charm can soothe her melancholy,
 What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover
And wring his bosom, is—to die.

Oliver Goldsmith

176 Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair!
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird,
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon
To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love;
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Frae aff its thorny tree;
And my fause luvver staw the rose,
But left the thorn wi' me.

Robert Burns

177 THE PROGRESS OF POESY

A Pindaric Ode

Awake, Aeolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs

A thousand rills their mazy progress take;
The laughing flowers that round them blow
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Thro' verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign;
Now rolling down the steep amain
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour:
The rocks and nodding groves re-bellow to the roar.

Oh! Sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares

And frantic Passions hear thy soft controul.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curb'd the fury of his ear
And dropt his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptred hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:
Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,
Temper'd to thy warbled lay.
O'er Idalia's velvet-green
The rosy-crown'd Loves are seen
On Cytherea's day;

With antic Sport, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet;
To brisk notes in cadence beating
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare:
Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay:
With arms sublime that float upon the air
In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

Man's feeble race what ills await!
Labour and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of fate!—
The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove:
Say, has he given in vain the heavenly Muse?
Night, and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry
He gives to range the dreary sky:
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of
war.

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,

In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
Th' unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles, that crown th' Aegean deep,
Fields that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Macander's amber waves
In lingering labyrinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute but to the voice of anguish!
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around
Every shade and hallow'd fountain
Murmur'd deep a solemn sound;
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains:
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, oh Albion! next, thy sea-encircled coast.

Far from the sun and summer-gale
In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,
To him the mighty Mother did unveil
Her awful face: the dauntless child
Stretch'd forth his little arms, and smiled.
"This pencil take," she said, "whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year;
Thine, too, these golden keys, immortal Boy!
This can unlock the gates of joy;

Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears.”

Nor second, He that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Extasy
The secrets of the abyss to spy :

He pass'd the flaming bounds of place and time ;
The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw ; but blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold where Dryden's less presumptuous car
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding
pace.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore !
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.
But ah ! 'tis heard no more—

Oh ! lyre divine, what daring spirit
Wakes thee now ? Tho' he inherit
Nor the pride nor ample pinion

That the Theban eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion

Thro' the azure deep of air :
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run

Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray
With orient hues, unborrow'd of the sun ;

Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate :

Beneath the Good how far—but far above the Great.

Thomas Gray

178

THE PASSIONS

An Ode for Music

When Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Throng'd around her magic cell.
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's painting,
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturb'd, delighted, raised, refined:
'Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatch'd her instruments of sound,
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for Madness ruled the hour)
Would prove his own expressive power.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rush'd, his eyes on fire,
In lightnings own'd his secret stings;
In one rude clash he struck the lyre
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woeful measures wan Despair,
Low sullen sounds, his grief beguiled;
A solemn, strange, and mingled air,
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure?
Still it whisper'd promised pleasure
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale
She call'd on Echo still through all the song;
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close;
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden
hair;—

And longer had she sung:—but with a frown
Revenge impatient rose:
He threw his blood-stain'd sword in thunder down;
And with a withering look
The war-denouncing trumpet took
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe!
And ever and anon he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat;
And, though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity at his side
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien,
While each strain'd ball of sight seem'd bursting from
his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd:
Sad proof of thy distressful state!
Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd;
And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on Hate.

With eyes up-raised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sat retired;
And from her wild, sequester'd seat,
In notes of distance made more sweet,
Pour'd through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
 And dashing soft from rocks around,
 Bubbling runnels join'd the sound.
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
Or, o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
 Round an holy calm diffusing,
 Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But O! how alter'd was its sprightlier tone,
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
 Her bow across her shoulder flung,
 Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung:—
 The hunter's call, to Faun and Dryad known!
The oak-crown'd Sisters and their chaste-eyed Queen,
 Satyrs and Sylvan Boys were seen
 Peeping from forth their alleys green;
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear;
And Sport leapt up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial:
He, with viny crown advancing,
 First to the lively pipe his hand address:
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol
 Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best:
They would have thought who heard the strain
 They saw, in Tempe's vale, her native maids
 Amidst the festal-sounding shades

To some unwearied minstrel dancing;
While, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round:
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
Why, goddess! why, to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As in that loved Athenian bower
You learn'd an all-commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O Nymph endear'd,
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that god-like age,
Fill thy recording Sister's page:
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age,
E'en all at once together found:—
Cecilia's mingled world of sound.
O bid our vain endeavours cease;
Revive the just designs of Greece;
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

William Collins

179*

THE SONG OF DAVID

He sang of God, the mighty source
 Of all things, the stupendous force
 On which all strength depends:
 From Whose right arm, beneath Whose eyes,
 All period, power, and enterprise
 Commences, reigns, and ends.

The world, the clustering spheres He made,
 The glorious light, the soothing shade,
 Dale, champaign, grove and hill;
 The multitudinous abyss,
 Where secrecy remains in bliss,
 And wisdom hides her skill.

“Tell them, I AM,” Jehovah said
 To Moses; while Earth heard in dread,
 And, smitten to the heart,
 At once, above, beneath, around,
 All Nature, without voice or sound,
 Replied, “O Lord, THOU ART.”

Christopher Smart

180

INFANT JOY

“I have no name;
 I am but two days old.”
 —What shall I call thee?
 “I happy am;

Joy is my name.”
—Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy, but two days old;
Sweet joy I call thee:
Thou dost smile:
I sing the while,
Sweet joy befall thee!

William Blake

A CRADLE SONG

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,
Dreaming in the joys of night;
Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Soft desires I can trace,
Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel,
Smiles as of the morning steal
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
Where thy little heart doth rest.

Oh the cunning wiles that creep
In thy little heart asleep!
When thy little heart doth wake,
Then the dreadful light shall break.

William Blake

182*

ODE ON THE SPRING

Lo! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers
And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of Spring;
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool Zephyrs thro' the clear blue sky
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader, browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care;
The panting herds repose;
Yet hark, how thro' the peopled air
The busy murmur glows!
The insect-youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring
And float amid the liquid noon;
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily-gilded trim
Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of Man;
And they that creep, and they that fly,
Shall end where they began.
Alike the Busy and the Gay
But flutter thro' life's little day,
In Fortune's varying colours drest;
Brush'd by the hand of rough Mischance,
Or chill'd by Age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low
The sportive kind reply:
"Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display;
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic while 'tis May."

Thomas Gray

The poplars are fell'd; farewell to the shade
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade;
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view
Of my favourite field and the bank where they grew;

And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade!

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat;
And the scene where his melody charm'd me before
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

The change both my heart and my fancy employs,
I reflect on the frailty of man and his joys:
Short-lived as we are, yet our pleasures, we see,
Have a still shorter date, and die sooner than we.

William Cowper

184

TO A MOUSE

*On turning her up in her nest, with the plough,
November, 1785*

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
O what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee
Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,

An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin;
And naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin'
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste
An' weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till, crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble
An' cranreuch cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane
In proving foresight may be vain:

The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain
For promised joy.

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, Och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

Robert Burns

185*

A WISH

Mine be a cot beside the hill;
A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;
A willowy brook that turns a mill,
With many a fall shall linger near.

The swallow oft, beneath my thatch
Shall twitter from her clay-built nest;
Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
And share my meal, a welcome guest.

Around my ivied porch shall spring
Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew;
And Lucy, at her wheel, shall sing
In russet-gown and apron blue.

The village-church among the trees,
Where first our marriage-vows were given,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze
And point with taper spire to Heaven.

Samuel Rogers

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, O pensive Eve, to soothe thine ear
 Like thy own solemn springs,
 Thy springs, and dying gales,

O Nymph reserved,—while now the bright-hair'd sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
 With brede ethereal wove,
 O'erhang his wavy bed,

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-eyed bat,
With short, shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,
 Or where the beetle winds
 His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum,—
 Now teach me, maid composed,
 To breathe some soften'd strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit;
 As, musing slow, I hail
 Thy genial loved return.

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
 The fragrant Hours, and Elves
 Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,

The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene ;
Or find some ruin midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams ;

Or, if chill blustering winds or driving rain
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut
That, from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires ;
And hears their simple bell ; and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve !
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light ;

While fallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves ;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train
And rudely rends thy robes :

So long, regardless of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And love thy favourite name !

William Collins

187 ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY
CHURCHYARD

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;

How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour:—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can honour's voice provoke the silent dust?
Or flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire,
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd
Or waked to extasy the living lyre;

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;

Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes

Their lot forbad; nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbad to wade thro' slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;

And many a holy text around she strews
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall enquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
“Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

“There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noon-tide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

“Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

“One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;

Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he.

“The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne,—
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.”

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth
A youth, to fortune and to fame unknown;
Fair science frown'd not on his humble birth
And melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to misery (all he had) a tear,
He gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode:
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),
The bosom of his Father and his God.

Thomas Gray

188*

MARY MORISON

O Mary, at thy window be,
It is the wish'd, the trysted hour!
Those smiles and glances let me see
That make the miser's treasure poor.
How blithely wad I bide the stoure,
A weary slave frae sun to sun,

Could I the rich reward secure,
The lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,—
I sat, but neither heard nor saw;
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sigh'd, and said amang them a',
“Ye are na Mary Morison.”

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace
Wha for thy sake wad gladly dee?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whase only faut is loving thee?
If love for love thou wilt na gie,
At least be pity to me shown;
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison.

Robert Burns

189*

BONNIE LESLEY

O saw ye bonnie Lesley
As she gaed o'er the border?
She's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever;
For Nature made her what she is,
And ne'er made sic anither!

Thou art a queen, Fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we, before thee;
Thou art divine, Fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee.

The Deil he could na scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He'd look into thy bonnie face,
And say "I canna wrang thee!"

The Powers aboon will tent thee,
Misfortune sha' na steer thee;
Thou'rt, like themselves, sae lovely
That ill they'll ne'er let near thee.

Return again, Fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie!
That we may brag we hae a lass
There's nane again sae bonnie.
Robert Burns

190 O my Luvè's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O my Luvè's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I;
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry:

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;

I will luvè thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only Luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.
Robert Burns

191*

HIGHLAND MARY

Ye banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasp'd her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and lock'd embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;

And pledging aft to meet again,
 We tore oursels asunder;
 But, Oh! fell Death's untimely frost,
 That nipt my flower sae early!
 Now green's the sod and cauld's the clay,
 That wraps my Highland Mary.

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
 I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly;
 And closed for aye the sparkling glance
 That dwelt on me sae kindly;
 And mouldering now in silent dust
 That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
 But still within my bosom's core
 Shall live my Highland Mary.

Robert Burns

When the sheep are in the fauld, and the kye at hame,
 And a' the world to rest are gane,
 The waes o' my heart fa' in showers frae my e'e,
 While my gudeman lies sound by me.

Young Jamie lo'ed me weel and sought me for his bride,
 But saving a croun he had naething else beside;
 To make the croun a pund young Jamie gaed to sea,
 And the croun and the pund were baith for me.

He hadna been awa' a week but only twa,
 When my father brak his arm, and the cow was stown
 awa;

My mother she fell sick, and my Jamie at the sea—
And auld Robin Gray came a-courtin' me.

My father couldna work, and my mother couldna spin;
I toil'd day and night, but their bread I couldna win;
Auld Rob maintain'd them baith, and wi' tears in his e'e
Said, "Jennie, for their sakes, O, marry me!"

My heart it said nay; I look'd for Jamie back;
But the wind it blew high, and the ship it was a wrack;
His ship it was a wrack—why didna Jamie dee?
Or why do I live to cry, "Wae's me?"

My father urgit sair; my mother didna speak,
But she look'd in my face till my heart was like to break;
They gi'ed him my hand, but my heart was at the sea—
Sae auld Robin Gray he was gudeman to me.

I hadna been a wife a week but only four,
When, mournfu' as I sat on the stane at the door,
I saw my Jamie's wraith, for I couldna think it he—
Till he said, "I'm come hame to marry thee."

O sair, sair did we greet, and muckle did we say;
We took but ae kiss, and I bad him gang away—
I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee;
And why was I born to say, "Wae's me!"

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena to spin;
I daurna think on Jamie, for that wad be a sin;
But I'll do my best a gude wife aye to be,
For auld Robin Gray he is kind unto me.

Lady Anne Lindsay

DUNCAN GRAY

Duncan Gray cam here to woo,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't;
On blythe Yule night when we were fou,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't:
Maggie coost her head fu' high,
Look'd asklent and unco skeigh,
Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh;
Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

Duncan fleech'd, and Duncan pray'd;
Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig;
Duncan sigh'd baith out and in,
Grat his een baith bleer't and blin',
Spak o' lowpin ower a linn!

Time and chance are but a tide,
Slighted love is sair to bide;
"Shall I, like a fool," quoth he,
"For a haughty hizzie dee?
She may gae to—France, for me!"

How it comes let doctors tell,
Meg grew sick—as he grew well;
Something in her bosom wrings;
For relief a sigh she brings,
And, O her een, they spak sic things!

Duncan was a lad o' grace;
Maggie's was a piteous case;
Duncan couldna be her death,
Swelling pity smoor'd his wrath;

Now they're crouse and canty baith:
Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

Robert Burns

194

THE SAILOR'S WIFE

And are ye sure the news is true?
And are ye sure he's weel?
Is this the time to think o' wark?
Ye jades, lay by your wheel.
Is this the time to spin a thread,
When Colin's at the door?
Reach down my cloak, I'll to the quay,
And see him come ashore.
For there's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck at a';
There's little pleasure in the house
When our gudeman's awa.

And gie to me my bigonet,
My bishop's satin gown;
For I maun tell the baillie's wife
That Colin's in the town.
My Turkey slippers maun gae on,
My stockins pearly blue;
It's a' to pleasure our gudeman,
For he's baith leal and true.

Rise, lass, and mak a clean fireside,
Put on the muckle pot;
Gie little Kate her button gown
And Jock his Sunday coat;

And mak their shoon as black as slaes,
Their hose as white as snaw;
It's a' to please my ain gudeman,
For he's been long awa.

There's twa fat hens upo' the coop
Been fed this month and mair,
Mak haste and thrav their necks about,
That Colin weel may fare;
And spread the table neat and clean,
Gar ilka thing look braw;
For wha can tell how Colin fared
When he was far awa?

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,
His breath like caller air;
His very foot has music in't
As he comes up the stair—
And will I see his face again?
And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
In troth I'm like to greet!

If Colin's weel, and weel content,
I hae nae mair to crave:
And gin I live to keep him sae,
I'm blest aboon the lave.
And will I see his face again,
And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
In troth I'm like to greet.
For there's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck at a';

There's little pleasure in the house
When our gudeman's awa.
William Julius Mickle

195

ABSENCE

When I think on the happy days
I spent wi' you, my dearie,
And now what lands between us lie,
How can I be but eerie!

How slow ye move, ye heavy hours,
As ye were wae and weary!
It was na sae ye glinted by
When I was wi' my dearie.
Unknown

196*

JEAN

Of a' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly like the West,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best.
There wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And mony a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair;
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air.

There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonnie bird that sings
But minds me o' my Jean.

O blaw ye westlin winds, blaw saft
Among the leafy trees;
Wi' balmy gale, frae hill and dale
Bring hame the laden bees;
And bring the lassie back to me
That's aye sae neat and clean;
Ae smile o' her wad banish care,
Sae charming is my Jean.

What sighs and vows amang the knowes
Hae pass'd atween us twa!
How fond to meet, how wae to part
That night she gaed awa!
The Powers aboon can only ken
To whom the heart is seen,
That nane can be sae dear to me
As my sweet lovely Jean!

Robert Burns

John Anderson my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is bald, John,
Your locks are like the snow;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
 We clamb the hill thegither,
 And mony a canty day, John,
 We've had wi' ane anither;
 Now we maun totter down, John,
 But hand in hand we'll go,
 And sleep thegither at the foot,
 John Anderson my jo.

Robert Burns

198*

THE LAND O' THE LEAL

I'm wearing awa', Jean,
 Like snaw when its thaw, Jean,
 I'm wearing awa'
 To the land o' the leal.
 There's nae sorrow there, Jean,
 There's neither cauld nor care, Jean,
 The day is aye fair,
 In the land o' the leal.

Ye were aye leal and true, Jean,
 Your task's ended noo, Jean,
 And I'll welcome you
 To the land o' the leal.
 Our bonnie bairn's there, Jean,
 She was baith guid and fair, Jean;
 O we grudged her right sair
 To the land o' the leal!

Then dry that tearfu' e'e, Jean,
 My soul langs to be free, Jean,

And angels wait on me
 To the land o' the leal.
 Now fare ye weel, my ain Jean,
 This warld's care is vain, Jean;
 We'll meet and aye be fain
 In the land o' the leal!
Lady Caroline Nairn

199 ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF
 ETON COLLEGE

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
 That crown the watery glade,
 Where grateful Science still adores
 Her Henry's holy shade;
 And ye, that from the stately brow
 Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below
 Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
 Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
 Wanders the hoary Thames along
 His silver-winding way;—

Ah happy hills, ah pleasing shade!
 Ah fields beloved in vain!
 Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
 A stranger yet to pain!
 I feel the gales that from ye blow
 A momentary bliss bestow,
 As, waving fresh their gladsome wing,
 My weary soul they seem to soothe,
 And, redolent of joy and youth,
 To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father Thames (for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race,
Disporting on thy margent green,
The paths of pleasure trace);
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm, thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthrall?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

While some, on earnest business bent,
Their murmuring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty,
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign
And unknown regions dare desery;
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs, by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possess'd;
The tear, forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast;
Theirs, buxom health, of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer, of vigour born,
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light
That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas! regardless of their doom
The little victims play;

No sense have they of ills to come
Nor care beyond to-day :
Yet see how all around 'em wait
The ministers of human fate
And black Misfortune's baleful train !
Ah show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murderous band !
Ah, tell them they are men !

These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame, that sculks behind ;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy with rankling tooth
That inly gnaws the secret heart,
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice
And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try
And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow ;
And keen Remorse, with blood defiled,
And moody Madness, laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the vale of years beneath
A griesly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their queen :

This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
 That every labouring sinew strains,
 Those in the deeper vitals rage;
 Lo! Poverty, to fill the band,
 That numbs the soul with icy hand,
 And slow-consuming Age.

To each his sufferings: all are men,
 Condemn'd alike to groan;
 The tender for another's pain,
 Th' unfeeling for his own.
 Yet, ah! why should they know their fate,
 Since sorrow never comes too late,
 And happiness too swiftly flies?
 Thought would destroy their paradise.
 No more;—where ignorance is bliss,
 'Tis folly to be wise.

Thomas Gray

200*

THE SHRUBBERY

O happy shades! to me unblest!
 Friendly to peace, but not to me!
 How ill the scene that offers rest,
 And heart that cannot rest, agree!

This glassy stream, that spreading pine,
 Those alders quivering to the breeze,
 Might soothe a soul less hurt than mine,
 And please, if anything could please.

But fix'd unalterable Care
 Foregoes not what she feels within,

Shows the same sadness everywhere,
And slights the season and the scene.

For all that pleased in wood or lawn
While Peace possess'd these silent bowers,
Her animating smile withdrawn,
Has lost its beauties and its powers.

The saint or moralist should tread
This moss-grown alley, musing, slow;
They seek like me the secret shade,
But not, like me, to nourish woe!

Me, fruitful scenes and prospects waste
Alike admonish not to roam;
These tell me of enjoyments past,
And those, of sorrows yet to come.

William Cowper

Daughter of Jove, relentless power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and torturing hour
The bad affright, afflict the best!
Bound in thy adamantine chain,
The proud are taught to taste of pain;
And purple tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy Sire to send on earth
Virtue, his darling child, design'd,
To thee he gave the heavenly birth
And bade to form her infant mind.

Stern, rugged nurse! thy rigid lore
With patience many a year she bore;
What sorrow was thou bad'st her know,
And from her own she learn'd to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
And leave us leisure to be good.
Light they disperse, and with them go
The summer friend, the flattering foe;
By vain Prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

Wisdom in sable garb array'd,
Immersed in rapturous thought profound,
And Melancholy, silent maid,
With leaden eye that loves the ground,
Still on thy solemn steps attend;
Warm Charity, the general friend,
With Justice, to herself severe,
And Pity dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh! gently on thy suppliant's head
Dread goddess, lay thy chastening hand!
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
Not circled with the vengeful band,
(As by the impious thou art seen)
With thundering voice, and threatening mien,
With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty:—

Thy form benign, oh goddess, wear,
Thy milder influence impart,

Thy philosophic train be there
To soften, not to wound, my heart;
The generous spark extinct revive,
Teach me to love and to forgive,
Exact my own defects to scan,
What others are to feel, and know myself a Man.
Thomas Gray

202* THE SOLITUDE OF ALEXANDER
 SELKIRK

I am monarch of all I survey;
My right there is none to dispute;
From the centre all round to the sea
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
O Solitude! where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech;
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts that roam over the plain
My form with indifference see,
They are so unacquainted with man
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, Friendship, and Love,
Divinely bestow'd upon man,
Oh, had I the wings of a dove,

How soon would I taste you again!
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth.

Ye winds that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial, endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more:
My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-wingéd arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there;
But alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair;
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There's mercy in every place,
And mercy (encouraging thought!)
Gives even affliction a grace
And reconciles man to his lot.

William Cowper

Mary ! I want a lyre with other strings,
 Such aid from Heaven as some have feign'd they drew,
 An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
 And undebased by praise of meaner things,
 That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
 I may record thy worth with honour due,
 In verse as musical as thou art true,
 And that immortalizes whom it sings:—
 But thou hast little need. There is a Book
 By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
 On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
 A chronicle of actions just and bright—
 There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine;
 And since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

William Cowper

The twentieth year is well-nigh past
 Since first our sky was overcast;
 Ah would that this might be the last!
 My Mary!

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
 I see thee daily weaker grow—
 'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
 My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
 For my sake restless heretofore,
 Now rust disused and shine no more;
 My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play'dst the housewife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language utter'd in a dream;
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign;
Yet, gently prest, press gently mine,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st
That now at every step thou mov'st
Upheld by two; yet still thou lov'st,
My Mary!

And still to love, though prest with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But ah! by constant heed I know
How oft the sadness that I show
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last—
My Mary!

William Cowper

Obscurest night involved the sky
The Atlantic billows roar'd,
When such a destined wretch as I,
Wash'd headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
Than he with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast
With warmer wishes sent;
He loved them both, but both in vain,
Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay;

Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away;
But waged with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted; nor his friends had fail'd
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevail'd,
That, pitiless perforce,
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford;
And such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delay'd not to bestow.
But he, they knew, nor ship nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seem'd, could he
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them;
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld;
And so long he, with unspent power,
His destiny repell'd;
And ever, as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried "Adieu!"

At length, his transient respite past,
His comrades, who before

Had heard his voice in every blast,
 Could catch the sound no more ;
For then, by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him ; but the page
 Of narrative sincere
That tells his name, his worth, his age,
 Is wet with Anson's tear ;
And tears by bards or heroes shed
Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
 Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
 A more enduring date ;
But misery still delights to trace
Its semblance in another's case :

No voice divine the storm allay'd,
 No light propitious shone,
When, snatch'd from all effectual aid,
 We perish'd, each alone ;
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelm'd in deeper gulfs than he.

William Cowper

In the downhill of life, when I find I'm declining,
 May my fate no less fortunate be
Than a snug elbow-chair will afford for reclining,
 And a cot that o'erlooks the wide sea ;

With an ambling pad-pony to pace o'er the lawn,
While I carol away idle sorrow,
And blithe as the lark that each day hails the dawn
Look forward with hope for Tomorrow.

With a porch at my door, both for shelter and shade too,
As the sunshine or rain may prevail;
And a small spot of ground for the use of the spade too,
With a barn for the use of the flail;
A cow for my dairy, a dog for my game,
And a purse when a friend wants to borrow;
I'll envy no Nabob his riches or fame,
Or what honours may wait him Tomorrow.

From the bleak northern blast may my cot be completely
Secured by a neighbouring hill;
And at night may repose steal upon me more sweetly
By the sound of a murmuring rill;
And while peace and plenty I find at my board,
With a heart free from sickness and sorrow,
With my friends may I share what Today may afford,
And let them spread the table Tomorrow.

And when I at last must throw off this frail cov'ring
Which I've worn for three-score years and ten,
On the brink of the grave I'll not seek to keep hov'ring,
Nor my thread wish to spin o'er again;
But my face in the glass I'll serenely survey,
And with smiles count each wrinkle and furrow,
As this old worn-out stuff, which is threadbare Today,
May become Everlasting Tomorrow.

John Collins

207*

Life! I know not what thou art,
But know that thou and I must part;
And when, or how, or where we met
I own to me's a secret yet.

Life! we've been long together
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear—
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear.
—Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not Good Night,—but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good Morning.

Anna Laetitia Barbauld

BOOK FOUR

208*

TO THE MUSES

Whether on Ida's shady brow,
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the sun, that now
From ancient melody have ceased;

Whether in Heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air,
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove
Beneath the bosom of the sea,
Wandering in many a coral grove,—
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry;

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoy'd in you!
The languid strings do scarcely move,
The sound is forced, the notes are few.

William Blake

209

ODE ON THE POETS

Bards of Passion and of Mirth
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Have ye souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new?

—Yes, and those of heaven commune
With the spheres of sun and moon;
With the noise of fountains wond'rous
And the parle of voices thund'rous;
With the whisper of heaven's trees
And one another, in soft ease
Seated on Elysian lawns
Browsed by none but Dian's fawns;
Underneath large blue-bells tented,
Where the daisies are rose-scented,
And the rose herself has got
Perfume which on earth is not;
Where the nightingale doth sing
Not a senseless, tranecéed thing,
But divine melodious truth,
Philosophic numbers smooth,
Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then
On the earth ye live again;
And the souls ye left behind you
Teach us, here, the way to find you
Where your other souls are joying,
Never slumber'd, never eloying.
Here, your earth-born souls still speak
To mortals, of their little week;
Of their sorrows and delights,
Of their passions and their spites,
Of their glory and their shame,
What doth strengthen and what maim:—
Thus ye teach us, every day,
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Ye have souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new!

John Keats

210 ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S
HOMER

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold.
—Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

John Keats

211*

LOVE

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When mid-way on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruin'd tower.

The moonshine stealing o'er the scene
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She lean'd against the arméd man,
The statue of the arméd knight;
She stood and listen'd to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I play'd a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he woo'd
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined; and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love
 Interpreted my own.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me that I gazed
 Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he cross'd the mountain-woods,
 Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
 In green and sunny glade,—

There came and look'd him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
 This miserable Knight!

And that, unknowing what he did,
He leap'd amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
 The Lady of the Land;—

And how she wept, and clasp'd his knees;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
 The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave,
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay ;—

His dying words—but when I reach'd
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturb'd her soul with pity !

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrill'd my guileless Genevieve :
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve,

And hopes, and fears that kindly hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherish'd long !

She wept with pity and delight,
She blush'd with love, and virgin shame ;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepp'd aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half inclosed me with her arms,
She press'd me with a meek embrace ;
And bending back her head, look'd up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calm'd her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.
Samuel Taylor Coleridge

212

ALL FOR LOVE

O talk not to me of a name great in story:
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is
wrinkled?

'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew besprinkled;
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary—
What care I for the wreaths that can only give glory?

Oh Fame!—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, there only I found thee!
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

Lord Byron

THE OUTLAW

O Brignall banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer-queen.
And as I rode by Dalton-Hall
Beneath the turrets high,
A Maiden on the castle-wall
Was singing merrily:
"O Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen."

"If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we
That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed
As blithe as Queen of May."
Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen."

"I read you, by your bugle-horn
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn
To keep the king's greenwood."
"A Ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light;

His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night ”
Yet sung she, “Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay ;
I would I were with Edmund there
To reign his Queen of May !

“With burnish’d brand and musketoon
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold Dragoon
That lists the tuck of drum.”
“I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear ;
But when the beetle sounds his hum
My comrades take the spear.
And O ! though Brignall banks be fair
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare
Would reign my Queen of May !

“Maiden ! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I’ll die ;
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I !
And when I’m with my comrades met
Beneath the greenwood bough,—
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.”

Chorus

Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer-queen.

Sir Walter Scott

214 There be none of Beauty's daughters
 With a magic like Thee;
And like music on the waters
 Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming;

And the midnight moon is weaving
 Her bright chain o'er the deep,
Whose breast is gently heaving
 As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

Lord Byron

215*

THE INDIAN SERENADE

I arise from dreams of Thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low
And the stars are shining bright;
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me—who knows how?
To thy chamber-window, Sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
The champak odours fail

Like sweet thoughts in a dream ;
The nightingale's complaint
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
O belovéd as thou art !

Oh lift me from the grass !
I die, I faint, I fail !
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas !
My heart beats loud and fast ;
Oh ! press it close to thine again
Where it will break at last.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

216 She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies,
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes ;
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress
Or softly lightens o'er her face,
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek and o'er that brow
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow

But tell of days in goodness spent,—
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent.

Lord Byron

217* She was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleam'd upon my sight:
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair,
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn:
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine:
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death:
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;

A perfect Woman, nobly piann'd
 To warn, to comfort, and command,
 And yet a Spirit still, and bright
 With something of an angel-light.

William Wordsworth

218* She is not fair to outward view
 As many maidens be;
 Her loveliness I never knew
 Until she smiled on me.
 O then I saw her eye was bright,
 A well of love, a spring of light.

 But now her looks are coy and cold,
 To mine they ne'er reply,
 And yet I cease not to behold
 The love-light in her eye:
 Her very frowns are fairer far
 Than smiles of other maidens are.

Hartley Coleridge

219* I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden;
 Thou needest not fear mine:
 My spirit is too deeply laden
 Ever to burthen thine.

 I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion;
 Thou needest not fear mine:
 Innocent is the heart's devotion
 With which I worship thine.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

220* She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove;
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

William Wordsworth

221* I travell'd among unknown men
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire;
And she I cherished turn'd her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings show'd, thy nights conceal'd
The bowers where Lucy play'd;

And thine, too, is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes survey'd.

William Wordsworth

222

THE EDUCATION OF NATURE

Three years she grew in sun and shower ;
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown ;
This Child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse ; and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see
Ev'n in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

“The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

“And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell:
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell.”

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene,
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

William Wordsworth

223

A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Roll'd round in earth's diurnal course
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

William Wordsworth

224*

A LOST LOVE

I meet thy pensive, moonlight face;
Thy thrilling voice I hear;
And former hours and scenes retrace,
Too fleeting, and too dear!

Then sighs and tears flow fast and free,
Though none is nigh to share;
And life has nought beside for me
So sweet as this despair.

There are crush'd hearts that will not break;
And mine, methinks, is one,
Or thus I should not weep and wake,
And thou to slumber gone.

I little thought it thus could be
In days more sad and fair—
That earth could have a place for me,
And thou no longer there.

Yet death cannot our hearts divide,
Or make thee less my own:
'Twere sweeter sleeping at thy side
Than watching here alone;

Yet never, never can we part,
While Memory holds her reign:
Thine, thine is still this wither'd heart,
Till we shall meet again.

Henry Francis Lyte

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

A Chieftain to the Highlands bound
Cries "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound
To row us o'er the ferry!"

"Now who be ye would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water?"
"O I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this, Lord Ullin's daughter.

"And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

"His horsemen hard behind us ride—
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride,
When they have slain her lover?"

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight,
"I'll go, my chief, I'm ready:
It is not for your silver bright,
But for your winsome lady:—

"And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So, though the waves are raging white,
I'll row you o'er the ferry."

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking;

And in the scowl of Heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode arméd men,
Their trampling sounded nearer.

“O haste thee, haste!” the lady cries,
“Though tempests round us gather;
I’ll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father.”

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,—
When, oh! too strong for human hand
The tempest gather’d o’er her.

And still they row’d amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing:
Lord Ullin reach’d that fatal shore,—
His wrath was changed to wailing.

For, sore dismay’d, through storm and shade
His child he did discover;—
One lovely hand she stretch’d for aid,
And one was round her lover.

“Come back! come back!” he cried in grief,
“Across this stormy water:
And I’ll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter!—Oh, my daughter!”

’Twas vain: the loud waves lash’d the shore,
Return or aid preventing;

The waters wild went o'er his child,
And he was left lamenting.

Thomas Campbell

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray;
And when I cross'd the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

“To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow.”

“That, Father! will I gladly do;
’Tis scarcely afternoon—
The minister-clock has just struck two
And yonder is the moon!”

At this the father raised his hook,
And snapp’d a faggot-band;

He plied his work;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe;
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time;
She wander'd up and down,
And many a hill did Lucy climb:
But never reach'd the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That overlook'd the moor,
And thence they saw the bridge of wood
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried
“In heaven we all shall meet!”
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downward from the steep hill's edge
They track'd the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone-wall;

And then an open field they cross'd:
The marks were still the same;

They track'd them on, nor ever lost:
And to the bridge they came.

They follow'd from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank;
And further there were none!

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

William Wordsworth.

“Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride;
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen”—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

“Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale:

Young Frank is chief of Errington
And lord of Langley-dale ;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa,
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair,
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair ;
And you the foremost o' them a'
Shall ride our forest-queen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa,
For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was deck'd at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmer'd fair,
The priest and bride-groom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there :
They sought her baith by bower and ha' ;
The ladie was not seen !
She's o'er the Border, and awa'
Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

Sir Walter Scott

The fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion ;
Nothing in the world is single,

All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle—
Why not I with thine?

See, the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdain'd its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moon-beams kiss the sea—
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?

Percy Bysshe Shelley

How sweet the answer Echo makes
To Music at night,
When, roused by lute or horn, she wakes,
And far away o'er lawns and lakes
Goes answering light!

Yet Love hath echoes truer far
And far more sweet
Than e'er, beneath the moonlight's star,
Of horn or lute or soft guitar
The songs repeat.

'Tis when the sigh,—in youth sincere
And only then,
The sigh that's breathed for one to hear—
Is by that one, that only Dear
Breathed back again. *Thomas Moore*

230*

A SERENADE

Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The orange-flower perfumes the bower,
The breeze is on the sea.
The lark, his lay who thrill'd all day,
Sits hush'd his partner nigh;
Breeze, bird, and flower confess the hour—
But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through the shade
Her shepherd's suit to hear;
To Beauty shy, by lattice high,
Sings high-born Cavalier.
The stars of Love, all stars above,
Now reigns o'er earth and sky,
And high and low the influence know—
But where is County Guy?

Sir Walter Scott

231*

TO THE EVENING STAR

Gem of the crimson-colour'd Even,
Companion of retiring day,
Why at the closing gates of heaven,
Beloved Star, dost thou delay?

So fair thy pensile beauty burns
When soft the tear of twilight flows;
So due thy plighted love returns
To chambers brighter than the rose;

To Peace, to Pleasure, and to Love
So kind a star thou seem'st to be,—
Sure some enamour'd orb above
Descends and burns to meet with thee.

Thine is the breathing, blushing hour
When all unheavenly passions fly,
Chased by the soul-subduing power
Of Love's delicious witchery.

O! sacred to the fall of day
Queen of propitious stars, appear,
And early rise, and long delay,
When Caroline herself is here!

Shine on her chosen green resort
Whose trees the sunward summit crown,
And wanton flowers, that well may court
An angel's feet to tread them down;

Shine on her sweetly scented road,
Thou star of evening's purple dome,
That lead'st the nightingale abroad
And guid'st the pilgrim to his home;

Shine where my charmer's sweeter breath
Embalms the soft exhaling dew,
Where dying winds a sigh bequeath
To kiss the cheek of rosy hue:—

Where, winnow'd by the gentle air,
Her silken tresses darkly flow
And fall upon her brow so fair,
Like shadows on the mountain snow.

Thus, ever thus, at day's decline,
In converse sweet to wander far—
O bring with thee my Caroline,
And thou shalt be my Ruling Star!
Thomas Campbell

232

TO THE NIGHT

Swiftly walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought;
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out;
Then wander o'er city and sea and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long-sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sigh'd for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turn'd to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sigh'd for thee;

Thy brother Death came and cried,

“Wouldst thou me?”

Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,

Murmur'd like a noon-tide bee:

“Shall I nestle near thy side?

Wouldst thou me?”—And I replied,

“No, not thee!”

Death will come when thou art dead,

Soon, too soon—

Sleep will come when thou art fled;

Of neither would I ask the boon

I ask of thee, belovéd Night—

Swift be thine approaching flight,

Come soon, soon!

Percy Bysshe Shelley

233*

TO A DISTANT FRIEND

Why art thou silent? Is thy love a plant

Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air

Of absence withers what was once so fair?

Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?

Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant,

Bound to thy service with unceasing care—

The mind's least generous wish a mendicant

For nought but what thy happiness could spare.

Speak!—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold

A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,

Be left more desolate, more dreary cold

Than a forsaken bird's-nest fill'd with snow

'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—

Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

William Wordsworth

234*

When we two parted
In silence and tears
Half broken-hearted,
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss:
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this!

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow;
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame:
I hear thy name spoken
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee
Who knew thee too well:
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met:
In silence I grieve
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,

How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears. .

Lord Byron

235*

HAPPY INSENSIBILITY

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity:
The north cannot undo them
With a sleety whistle through them,
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy brook,
Thy bubblings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look;
But with a sweet forgetting
They stay their crystal fretting,
Never, never petting
About the frozen time.

Ah! would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy!
But were there ever any
Writhed not at passéd joy?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it
Nor numbéd sense to steal it—
Was never said in rhyme.

John Keats

Where shall the lover rest
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted for ever?
Where, through groves deep and high
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die
Under the willow.
Eleu loro
Soft shall be his pillow.

There, through the summer day
Cool streams are laving;
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving;
There thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted for ever,
Never again to wake
Never, O never!
Eleu loro
Never, O never!

Where shall the traitor rest,
He, the deceiver,
Who could win maiden's breast,
Ruin, and leave her?
In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying;
Eleu loro
There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the falsehearted;
His warm blood the wolf shall lap
Ere life be parted;
Shame and dishonour sit
By his grave ever;
Blessing shall hallow it
Never, O never!
Eleu loro
Never, O never!

Sir Walter Scott

237

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

“O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has wither'd from the lake
And no birds sing.

“O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms!
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

“I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.”

“I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

“I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

“I set her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

“She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said
'I love thee true.'

“She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sigh'd full sore;
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

“And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dream'd—Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill's side.

“I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried—'La belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!'

“I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gapéd wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill's side.

“And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither’d from the lake,
And no birds sing.”

John Keats

THE ROVER

“A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine!
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine.
A lightsome eye, a soldier’s mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green—
No more of me you knew,
My Love!
No more of me you knew.

“This morn in merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow
Ere we two meet again.”
He turn’d his charger as he spake
Upon the river shore,
He gave the bridle-reins a shake,
Said “Adieu for evermore,
My Love!
And adieu for evermore.”

Sir Walter Scott

THE FLIGHT OF LOVE

When the lamp is shatter'd,
The light in the dust lies dead;
When the cloud is scatter'd,
The rainbow's glory is shed;
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remember'd not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruin'd cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possesst.
O Love! who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee,
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee,

Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cool winds come.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

THE MAID OF NEIDPATH

O lovers' eyes are sharp to see,
And lovers' ears in hearing;
And love, in life's extremity,
Can lend an hour of cheering.
Disease had been in Mary's bower
And slow decay from mourning,
Though now she sits on Neidpath's tower
To watch her Love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,
Her form decay'd by pining,
Till through her wasted hand, at night,
You saw the taper shining.
By fits a sultry hectic hue
Across her cheek was flying;
By fits so ashy pale she grew
Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear
Seem'd in her frame residing:
Before the watch-dog prick'd his ear,
She heard her lover's riding;
Ere scarce a distant form was kenn'd,
She knew and waved to greet him

And o'er the battlement did bend
As on the wing to meet him.

He came—he pass'd—an heedless gaze
As o'er some stranger glancing;
Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,
Lost in his courser's prancing—
The castle-arch, whose hollow tone
Returns each whisper spoken,
Could scarcely catch the feeble moan
Which told her heart was broken.

Sir Walter Scott

241*

Earl March look'd on his dying child,
And, smit with grief to view her—
“The youth,” he cried, “whom I exiled
Shall be restored to woo her.”

She's at the window many an hour
His coming to discover:
And he look'd up to Ellen's bower
And she look'd on her lover—

But ah! so pale, he knew her not,
Though her smile on him was dwelling—
“And am I then forgot—forgot?”
It broke the heart of Ellen.

In vain he weeps, in vain he sighs,
Her cheek is cold as ashes;
Nor love's own kiss shall wake those eyes
To lift their silken lashes.

Thomas Campbell

242*

Bright Star! would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
Of snow, upon the mountains and the moors:—
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair Love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever,—or else swoon to death.

John Keats

243

THE TERROR OF DEATH

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,
Before high-piléd books in charact'ry,
Hold, like rich garners, the full-ripen'd grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starr'd face,
Huge, cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;
And when I feel, fair Creature of an hour!
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the faery power
Of unreflecting love—then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think,
Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

John Keats

244

DESIDERIA

Surprised by joy—impatient as the wind—
I turn'd to share the transport—Oh! with whom
But Thee—deep buried in the silent tomb,
That spot which no vicissitude can find?
Love, faithful love recall'd thee to my mind—
But how could I forget thee? Through what power,
Even for the least division of an hour,
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
To my most grievous loss!—That thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more;
That neither present time, nor years unborn
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

William Wordsworth

245*

At the mid hour of night, when stars are weeping,
I fly
To the lone vale we loved, when life shone warm in
thine eye;
And I think oft, if spirits can steal from the regions
of air
To revisit past scenes of delight, thou wilt come to
me there
And tell me our love is remember'd, even in the sky!

Then I sing the wild song it once was rapture to hear
When our voices, commingling, breathed like one on
the ear;

And as Echo far off through the vale my sad orison
 rolls,
I think, oh my Love! 'tis thy voice, from the King-
 dom of Souls
Faintly answering still the notes that once were so
 dear.

Thomas Moore

246*

ELEGY ON THYRZA

And thou art dead, as young and fair
 As aught of mortal birth;
And form so soft and charms so rare
 Too soon return'd to Earth!
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
 In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low
 Nor gaze upon the spot:
There flowers or weeds at will may grow
 So I behold them not;
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
 Like common earth can rot;
To me there needs no stone to tell
'Tis Nothing, that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last,
 As fervently as thou,

Who didst not change through all the past
And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow;
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours;
The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lours,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep;
Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have pass'd away
I might have watch'd through long decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
Must fall the earliest prey;
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
The leaves must drop away.
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
Than see it pluck'd today,
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade;
The night that follow'd such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade:
Thy day without a cloud hath past,

And thou wert lovely to the last,
Extinguish'd, not decay'd;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed
To think I was not near, to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed:
To gaze, how fondly! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head,
And show that love, however vain,
Nor 'thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
(Though thou hast left me free)
The loveliest things that still remain
Than thus remember thee!
The all of thine that cannot die
Through dark and dread Eternity
Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught except its living years.

Lord Byron

One word is too often profaned
For me to profane it;
One feeling too falsely disdain'd
For thee to disdain it;
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother;

And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love;
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not:
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?
Percy Bysshe Shelley

248* GATHERING SONG OF DONALD THE BLACK

Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan Conuil.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war-array,
Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen, and
From mountain so rocky;
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlocky.
Come every hill-plaid, and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade, and
Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterr'd,
The bride at the altar;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges:
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadwords, and targes.

Come as the winds come, when
Forests are rended,
Come as the waves come, when
Navies are stranded:
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page, and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set!
Pibroch and Donuil Dhu
Knell for the onset!

Sir Walter Scott

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;

And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While, like the eagle free,
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

“O for a soft and gentle wind!”
I heard a fair one cry:
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornéd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
But hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud:
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

Allen Cunningham

250

Ye Mariners of England,
That guard our native seas!
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze!
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe;
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;

While the battle rages loud and long
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave—
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave;
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below—
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean-warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;

When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

Thomas Campbell

251

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

Of Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the Princee of all the land
Led them on

Like leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine,
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line.
It was ten of April morn by the chime.
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

But the might of Engand flush'd
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the flecter rush'd
O'er the deadly space between.
"Hearts of oak!" our captains cried, when each
gun

From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom;—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shatter'd sail,
Or in conflagration pale
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then
As he hail'd them o'er the wave,
"Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save:—
So peace instead of death let us bring;
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King."

Then Denmark bless'd our chief
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildy rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day:
While the sun look'd smiling bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, old England, raise!
 For the tidings of thy might,
 By the festal cities' blaze,
 Whilst the wine-cup shines in light;
 And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
 Let us think of them that sleep
 Full many a fathom deep
 By thy wild and stormy steep,
 Elsinore!

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
 Once so faithful and so true,
 On the deck of fame that died,
 With the gallant, good Riou:
 Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave!
 While the billow mournful rolls
 And the mermaid's song condoles,
 Singing glory to the souls
 Of the brave!

Thomas Campbell

252

ODE TO DUTY

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
 O Duty! if that name thou love,
 Who art a light to guide, a rod
 To check the erring, and reprove;
 Thou who art victory and law
 When empty terrors overawe;
 From vain temptations dost set free,
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
 Be on them; who, in love and truth

Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not:
O! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them
cast.

Serene will be our days and bright
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security;
And they a blissful course may hold
Ev'n now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed,
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust;
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferr'd
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy controul,
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this uncharter'd freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name;
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
And the most ancient Heavens, through Thee, are fresh
and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live.

William Wordsworth

253* ON THE CASTLE OF CHILLON

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of Thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd,
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place
And thy sad floor an altar, for 'twas trod,

Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

Lord Byron

254* ENGLAND AND SWITZERLAND, 1802

Two Voices are there: one is of the Sea,
One of the Mountains; each a mighty voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!
There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him,—but hast vainly striven:
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
—Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft;
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left—
For, high-soul'd Maid, what sorrow would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by Thee!

William Wordsworth

255* ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN
REPUBLIC

Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee
And was the safeguard of the West; the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of Liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a mate,

She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay,—
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reach'd its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great is pass'd away.

William Wordsworth

256*

LONDON, 1802

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, oppress'd
To think that now our life is only drest
For show: mean handi-work of craftsman, cook,
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now, in nature or in book,
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking, are no more;
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

William Wordsworth

257*

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee; she is a fen
Of stagnant waters; altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;

Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;
So didst thou travel on life's common way
In cheerful godliness; and yet the heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

William Wordsworth

258*

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great nations; how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold,—some fears unnamed
I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
For dearly must we prize thee, we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled:
What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

William Wordsworth

259

HOHENLINDEN

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast array'd
Each horseman draw his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neigh'd
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thundre riven;
Then rush'd the steed, to battle driven;
And louder than the bolts of Heaven
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn; but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye Brave
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part, where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

Thomas Campbell

AFTER BLENHEIM

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun;
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh
" 'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
" Who fell in the great victory.

" I find them in the garden,
For there's many here about;
And often when I go to plough
The ploughshare turns them out.
For many thousand men," said he,
" Were slain in that great victory."

" Now tell us what 'twas all about,"
Young Peterkin he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes:

“Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for.”

“It was the English,” Kaspar cried,
“Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for
I could not well make out.
But everybody said,” quoth he,
“That ’twas a famous victory.

“My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

“With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then
And newborn baby died:
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

“They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun:
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

“Great praise the Duke of Marlbro’ won
And our good Prince Eugene;”
“Why ’twas a very wicked thing!”
Said little Wilhelmine;

“Nay . . nay . . my little girl,” quoth he,
“It was a famous victory.

“And everybody praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win.”

“But what good came of it at last?”

Quoth little Peterkin:—

“Why that I cannot tell,” said he,

“But ’twas a famous victory.”

Robert Southey

261

PRO PATRIA MORI

When he who adores thee has left but the name
Of his fault and his sorrows behind,
Oh! say wilt thou weep, when they darken the fame
Of a life that for thee was resign’d!
Yes, weep, and however my foes may condemn,
Thy tears shall efface their decree;
For, Heaven can witness, though guilty to them,
I have been but too faithful to thee.

With thee were the dreams of my earliest love;
Every thought of my reason was thine:
In my last humble prayer to the Spirit above
Thy name shall be mingled with mine!
Oh! blest are the lovers and friends who shall live
The days of thy glory to see;
But the next dearest blessing that Heaven can give
Is the pride of thus dying for thee.

Thomas Moore

262* THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE AT
CORUNNA

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning,
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollow'd his narrow bed
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;

And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory ;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.

Charles Wolfe

263* SIMON LEE THE OLD HUNTSMAN

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor Hall,
An old man dwells, a little man,—
'Tis said he once was tall.
Full five-and-thirty years he lived
A running huntsman merry ;
And still the centre of his cheek
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee,
When Echo bandied round and round
The halloo of Simon Lee.
In those proud days he little cared
For husbandry or tillage ;
To blither tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind ;
And often, ere the chase was done
He reel'd and was stone-blind.

And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices.

But oh the heavy change!—bereft
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred, see!
Old Simon to the world is left
In liveried poverty:—
His master's dead, and no one now
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead;
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick,
His body, dwindled and awry,
Rests upon ankles swoln and thick;
His legs are thin and dry.
One prop he has, the only one,—
His wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
A scrap of land they have, but they
Are poorest of the poor.
This scrap of land he from the heath
Enclosed when he was stronger;
But what to him avails the land
Which he can till no longer?

Oft, working by her husband's side,
Ruth does what Simon cannot do;

For she, with scanty cause for pride,
Is stouter of the two.
And, though you with your utmost skill
From labour could not wean them,
'Tis little, very little, all
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell.
My gentle Reader, I perceive
How patiently you've waited
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O Reader! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle Reader! you would find
A tale in every thing.
What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it;
It is no tale; but, should you think,
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see
This old Man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree.
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock totter'd in his hand;
So vain was his endeavour
That at the root of the old tree
He might have work'd for ever.

“You’re overtask’d, good Simon Lee,
Give me your tool,” to him I said;
And at the word right gladly he
Received my proffer’d aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I sever’d
At which the poor old man so long
And vainly had endeavour’d.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seem’d to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.
—I’ve heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning;
Alas! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.

William Wordsworth

264

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a Love once, fairest among women:
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man;
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like, I paced round the haunts of my childhood,
Earth seem'd a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces,

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

Charles Lamb

265*

THE JOURNEY ONWARDS

As slow our ship her foamy track
Against the wind was cleaving,
Her trembling pennant still look'd back
To that dear isle 'twas leaving.
So loth we part from all we love,
From all the links that bind us;
So turn our hearts, as on we rove,
To those we've left behind us!

When, round the bowl, of vanish'd years
We talk with joyous seeming—
With smiles that might as well be tears
So faint, so sad their beaming;

While memory brings us back again
Each early tie that twined us,
Oh, sweet's the cup that circles then
To those we've left behind us!

And when, in other climes, we meet
Some isle or vale enchanting,
Where all looks flowery, wild, and sweet,
And nought but love is wanting;
We think how great had been our bliss
If Heaven had but assign'd us
To live and die in scenes like this,
With some we've left behind us!

As travellers oft look back at eve
When eastward darkly going,
To gaze upon that light they leave
Still faint behind them glowing,—
So, when the close of pleasure's day
To gloom hath near consign'd us,
We turn to catch one fading ray
Of joy that's left behind us.

Thomas Moore

266*

YOUTH AND AGE

There's not a joy the world can give like that it
takes away
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's
dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone,
which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth
itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of
happiness
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt, or ocean of excess:
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in
vain
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never
stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself
comes down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its
own;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our
tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the
ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth
distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their
former hope of rest;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and
gray beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt, or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er many a
vanish'd scene,—
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish
though they be,
So midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would
flow, to me!

Lord Byron

267

A LESSON

There is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
That shrinks like many more from cold and rain,
And the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distrest,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm
In close self-shelter, like a thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I past,
And recognized it, though an alter'd form,
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopp'd and said, with inly-mutter'd voice,
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold;
This neither is its courage nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.

"The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew;
It cannot help itself in its decay;
Stiff in its members, wither'd, changed of hue,"—
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was gray.

To be a prodigal's favourite—then, worse truth,
A miser's pensioner—behold our lot!
O Man! that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not!

William Wordsworth

I remember, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window, where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon
Nor brought too long a day;
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember
The roses, red and white,
The violets, and the lily-cups—
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birth-day,—
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing;
My spirit flew in feathers then
That is so heavy now,
And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow.

I remember, I remember
The fir trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,

But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heaven
Than when I was a boy.

Thomas Hood

269*

THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

Oft in the stilly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me:
The smiles, the tears
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now 'dim'd and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken!
Thus in the stilly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends so link'd together
I've seen around me fall
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed!

Thus in the stilly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

Thomas Moore

270 STANZAS WRITTEN IN DEJECTION NEAR
NAPLES

The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright,
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent might;
The breath of the moist earth is light
Around its unexpanded buds;
Like many a voice of one delight—
The winds', the birds', the ocean-floods'—
The city's voice itself is soft like Solitude's.

I see the deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple sea-weeds strown;
I see the waves upon the shore
Like light dissolved in star-showers thrown:
I sit upon the sands alone;
The lightning of the noon-tide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion—
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

Alas! I have not hope nor health,
Nor peace within or calm around,
Nor that content, surpassing wealth,
The sage in meditation found,

And walk'd with inward glory crown'd—
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure;
Others I see whom these surround—
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild
Even as the winds and waters are:
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne, and yet must bear,—
Till death, like sleep, might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.
Percy Bysshe Shelly

271*

THE SCHOLAR

My days among the Dead are past;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old:
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedew'd
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the Dead; with them
I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the Dead; anon
My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all Futurity;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

Robert Southey

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?
Have ye tippled drink more fine
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or are fruits of Paradise
Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of venison? O generous food!
Drest as though bold Robin Hood
Would, with his Maid Marian,
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have hear that on a day
Mine host's sign-board flew away
Nobody knew whither, till
An astrologer's old quill

To a sheepskin gave the story :
Said he saw you in your glory,
Underneath a new-old sign
Sipping beverage divine,
And pledging with contented smack
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?
John Keats

273*

THE PRIDE OF YOUTH

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early ;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

“Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?”

“When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.”

“Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?”

“The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

“The glowworm o’er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady ;
The owl from the steeple sing
Welcome, proud lady.”

Sir Walter Scott

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

One more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!
Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements,
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully,
Think of her mournfully,
Gently, and humanly;
Not of the stains of her—
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful:
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—

Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammy.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence,
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,

With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver,
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery
Swift to be hurl'd—
Any where, any where
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran,—
Over the brink of it;
Picture it—think of it,
Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;

And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.
—Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour.

Thomas Hood

275*

ELEGY

Oh snatch'd away in beauty's bloom!
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year,
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom;

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,

And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And, lingering, pause, and lightly tread:
Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead!

Away! we know that tears are vain,
That Death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou, who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.
Lord Byron

276*

HESTER

When maidens such as Hester die,
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try
 With vain endeavour.
A month or more hath she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed
 And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate
 That flush'd her spirit:
I know not by what name beside
I shall it call: if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied
 She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool;

But she was train'd in Nature's school,
Nature had blest her.
A waking eye, a prying mind,
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind;
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind,—
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbour! gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet, as heretofore
Some summer morning—
When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that would not go away,
A sweet fore-warning?

Charles Lamb

277*

TO MARY

If I had thought thou couldst have died,
I might not weep for thee;
But I forgot, when by thy side,
That thou couldst mortal be;
It never through my mind had past
The time would e'er be o'er.
And I on thee should look my last,
And thou shouldst smile no more!

And still upon that face I look,
And think 'twill smile again;
And still the thought I will not brook,
That I must look in vain!

But when I speak—thou dost not say
What thou ne'er left'st unsaid;
And now I feel, as well I may,
Sweet Mary! thou art dead!

If thou wouldst stay, e'en as thou art,
All cold and all serene—
I still might press thy silent heart,
And where thy smiles have been.
While e'en thy chill, bleak corse I have,
Thou seemest still mine own;
But there I lay thee in thy grave—
And I am now alone!

I do not think, where'er thou art,
Thou hast forgotten me;
And I, perhaps, may soothe this heart,
In thinking too of thee.
Yet there was round thee such a dawn
Of light ne'er seen before,
As fancy never could have drawn,
And never can restore!

Charles Wolfe

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
From the raindrops shall borrow,—
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary ;
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,—
But our flower was in flushing
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber !
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone ; and for ever !
Sir Walter Scott

THE DEATH BED

We watch'd her breathing thro' the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seem'd to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied—

We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

Thomas Hood

280*

AGNES

I saw her in childhood—
A bright, gentle thing,
Like the dawn of the morn,
Or the dews of the spring;
The daisies and hare-bells
Her playmates all day;
Herself as light-hearted
And artless as they.

I saw her again—
A fair girl of eighteen,
Fresh glittering with graces
Of mind and of mien.
Her speech was all music;
Like moonlight she shone;
The envy of many,
The glory of one.

Years, years fled over—
I stood at her foot:
The bud had grown blossom,
The blossom was fruit.

A dignified mother,
Her infant she bore;
And look'd, I thought, fairer
Than ever before.

I saw her once more—
'Twas the day that she died;
Heaven's light was around her,
And God at her side;
No wants to distress her,
No fear to appal—
O then, I felt, then
She was fairest of all!
Henry Francis Lyte

281

ROSABELLE

O listen, listen, ladies gay!
No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

“Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!
And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

“The blackening wave is edged with white;
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly;
The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

“Last night the gifted Seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay;

Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch;
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?"

" 'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball;
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

" 'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well;
But that my sire the wine will chide
If 'tis not fill'd by Rosabelle."

—O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—

So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high Saint Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold,
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;
Each one the holy vault doth hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle.

And each Saint Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

Sir Walter Scott

282*

ON AN INFANT DYING AS SOON AS BORN

I saw where in the shroud did lurk
A curious frame of Nature's work:
A flow'ret crushéd in the bud,
A nameless piece of Babyhood,
Was in her cradle-coffin lying;
Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying:
So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb
For darker closets of the tomb!
She did but ope an eye, and put
A clear beam forth, then straight up shut
For the long dark; ne'er more to see
Through glasses of mortality.
Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?
Shall we say, that Nature blind

Check'd her hand, and changed her mind
Just when she had exactly wrought
A finish'd pattern, without fault?
Could she flag, or could she tire,
Or lack'd she the Promethean fire
(With her nine moons' long workings sicken'd)
That should thy little limbs have quicken'd?
Limbs so firm, they seem'd to assure
Life of health, and days mature:
Woman's self in miniature!
Limbs so fair, they might supply
(Themselves now but cold imagery)
The sculptor to make Beauty by.
Or did the stern-eyed Fate desery
That babe or mother, one must die;
So in mercy left the stock
And cut the branch; to save the shock
Of young years widow'd, and the pain
When Single State comes back again
To the lone man who, reft of wife,
Thenceforward drags a maiméd life?
The economy of Heaven is dark,
And wisest clerks have miss'd the mark
Why human buds, like this, should fall,
More brief than fly ephemeral
That has his day, while shrivell'd crones
Stiffen with age to stocks and stones,
And crabbéd use the conscience sears
In sinners of an hundred years.
—Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss:
Rites, which custom does impose,
Silver bells, and baby clothes;
Coral redder than those lips

Which pale death did late eclipse;
Music framed for infants' glee,
Whistle never tuned for thee;
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,
Loving hearts were they which gave them.
Let not one be missing; nurse,
See them laid upon the hearse
Of infant slain by doom perverse.
Why should kings and nobles have
Pictured trophies to their grave,
And we, churls, to thee deny
Thy pretty toys with thee to lie—
A more harmless vanity?

Charles Lamb

283*

IN MEMORIAM

A child's a plaything for an hour;
Its pretty tricks we try
For that or for a longer space,—
Then tire, and lay it by.

But I knew one that to itself
All seasons could control;
That would have mock'd the sense of pain
Out of a grievéd soul.

Thou straggler into loving arms,
Young climber up of knees,
When I forget thy thousand ways
Then life and all shall cease!

Mary Lamb

284* THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET

Where art thou, my beloved Son,
Where art thou, worse to me than dead?
Oh find me, prosperous or undone!
Or if the grave be now thy bed,
Why am I ignorant of the same,
That I may rest; and neither blame
Nor sorrow may attend thy name?

Seven years, alas! to have received
No tidings of an only child—
To have despair'd, have hoped, believed,
And been for ever more beguiled,—
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss!
I catch at them, and then I miss:
Was ever darkness like to this?

He was among the prime in worth,
An object beauteous to behold:
Well born, well bred; I sent him forth
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold;
If things ensued that wanted grace
As hath been said, they were not base;
And never blush was on my face.

Ah! little doth the young-one dream,
When full of play and childish cares,
What power is in his wildest scream
Heard by his mother unawares!
He knows it not, he cannot guess;
Years to a mother bring distress,
But do not make her love the less.

Neglect me! no, I suffer'd long
From that ill thought; and being blind
Said "Pride shall help me in my wrong:
Kind mother have I been, as kind
As ever breathed:" and that is true;
I've wet my path with tears like dew,
Weeping for him when no one knew.

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,
Hopeless of honour and of gain,
Oh! do not dread thy mother's door;
Think not of me with grief and pain:
I now can see with better eyes;
And worldly grandeur I despise
And fortune, with her gifts and lies.

Alas! the fowls of heaven have wings,
And blasts of heaven will aid their flight;
They mount—how short a voyage brings
The wanderers back to their delight!
Chains tie us down by land and sea;
And wishes, vain as mine, may be
All that is left to comfort thee.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan
Maim'd, mangled by inhuman men;
Or thou upon a desert thrown
Inheritest the lion's den;
Or hast been summon'd to the deep
Thou, thou, and all thy mates to keep
An incommunicable sleep.

I look for ghosts: but none will force
Their way to me; 'tis falsely said

That there was ever intercourse
Between the living and the dead,
For surely then I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night
With love and longings infinite.

My apprehensions come in crowds;
I dread the rustling of the grass;
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass;
I question things, and do not find
One that will answer to my mind;
And all the world appears unkind.

Beyond participation lie
My troubles, and beyond relief:
If any chance to heave a sigh,
They pity me, and not my grief.
Then come to me, my Son, or send
Some tidings that my woes may end!
I have no other earthly friend.

William Wordsworth

HUNTING SONG

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day;
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk and horse and hunting-spear;
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily merrily mingle they:
Waken, lords and ladies gay.

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming,
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay:
“Waken, lords and ladies gay.”

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the greenwood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd;
You shall see him brought to bay—
“Waken, lords and ladies gay.”

Louder, louder chant the lay
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth and mirth and glee
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman! who can baulk,
Stanch as hound and fleet as hawk;
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay!

Sir Walter Scott

Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?

Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still!

To the last point of vision, and beyond
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-prompted strain
—'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond—
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain;
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege! to sing
All independent of the leafy Spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine,
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine;
Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam—
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home.

William Wordsworth

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest;
Like a cloud of fire,
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,

O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight,
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight:

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflow'd.

What thou art we know not:
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody:—

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not;

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower ;

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the
view ;

Like a rose embower'd
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflower'd,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-wingéd
thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awaken'd flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine ;
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal
Or triumphal chaunt,

Matched with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Langour cannot be;
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee;
Thou lovest, but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate and pride and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then, as I am listening now!
Percy Bysshe Shelley

Beneath these fruit-tree boughs that shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
With brightest sunshine round me spread
Of Spring's unclouded weather,
In this sequester'd nook how sweet
To sit upon my orchard-seat!
And flowers and birds once more to greet,
My last year's friends together.

One have I mark'd, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest:
Hail to Thee, far above the rest
In joy of voice and pinion!
Thou, Linet! in thy green array,
Presiding Spirit here to-day,
Dost lead the revels of the May;
And this is thy dominion.

While birds and butterflies and flowers
Make all one band of paramours,
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
Art sole in thy employment:
A Life, a Presence like the air,
Scattering thy gladness without care,
Too blest with any one to pair;
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees
That twinkle to the gusty breeze
Behold him perch'd in ecstasies,
Yet seeming still to hover;
There! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives—
A brother of the dancing leaves;
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves
Pours forth his song in gushes;
As if by that exulting strain
He mock'd and treated with disdain
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
While fluttering in the bushes.

William Wordsworth

289*

TO THE CUCKOO

O blithe new-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice:
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listen'd to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush and tree and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still long'd for, never seen!

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial faery place,
That is fit home for Thee!

William Wordsworth

290

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not though envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-wingéd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-dèlvéd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainéd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known:
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies,
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Cluster'd round by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalméd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild:
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a muséd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;

The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?
John Keats

291*

UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPT. 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,—
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!

The river glideth at its own sweet will;
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

William Wordsworth

292*

To one who has been long in city pent,
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.
Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair
And gentle tale of love and languishment?
Returning home at evening, with an ear
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,
He mourns that day so soon has glided by:
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
That falls through the clear ether silently.

John Keats

293

OZYMANDIAS OF EGYPT

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamp'd on these lifeless things,
The hand that mock'd them and the heart that fed;

And on the pedestal these words appear :
“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings :
Look on my work, ye Mighty, and despair !”
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

294*

COMPOSED AT NEIDPATH CASTLE, THE PROP-
ERTY OF LORD QUEENSBERRY, 1803

Degenerate Douglas ! oh, the unworthy lord !
Whom mere despite of heart could so far please
And love of havoc, (for with such disease
Fame taxes him,) that he could send forth word
To level with the dust a noble horde,
A brotherhood of venerable trees,
Leaving an ancient dome and towers like these
Beggar'd and outraged !—Many hearts deplored
The fate of those old trees ; and oft with pain
The traveller at this day will stop and gaze
On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed :
For shelter'd places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,
And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,
And the green silent pastures yet remain.

William Wordsworth

295*

THE BEECH TREE'S PETITION

O leave this barren spot to me !
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree !
Though bush or floweret never grow

My dark unwarming shade below ;
Nor summer bud perfume the dew
Of rosy blush, or yellow hue ;
Nor fruits of autumn, blossom-born,
My green and glossy leaves adorn ;
Nor murmuring tribes from me derive
Th' ambrosial amber of the hive :
Yet leave this barren spot to me :
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree !

Thrice twenty summers I have seen
The sky grow bright, the forest green ;
And many a wintry wind have stood
In bloomless, fruitless solitude,
Since childhood in my pleasant bower
First spent its sweet and sportive hour ;
Since youthful lovers in my shade
Their vows of truth and rapture made,
And on my trunk's surviving frame
Carved many a long-forgotten name.
Oh ! by the sighs of gentle sound,
First breathed upon this sacred ground ;
By all that Love has whisper'd here,
Or Beauty heard with ravish'd ear ;
As Love's own altar honour me ;
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree !
Thomas Campbell

296* ADMONITION TO A TRAVELLER

Yes, there is holy pleasure in thine eye !
—The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook
Hath stirr'd thee deeply, with its own dear brook,

Its own small pasture, almost its own sky!
But covet not the abode; forbear to sigh
As many do, repining while they look;
Intruders—who would tear from Nature's book
This precious leaf with harsh impiety.
—Think what the home must be if it were thine,
Even thine, though few thy wants!—Roof, window, door,
The very flowers are sacred to the Poor,
The roses to the porch which they entwine:
Yea, all that now enchants thee, from the day
On which it should be touch'd, would melt away!

William Wordsworth

297 TO THE HIGHLAND GIRL OF
 INVERSNEYDE

Sweet Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower!
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head;
And these gray rocks, that household lawn,
Those trees—a veil just half withdrawn,
This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake,
This little bay, a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy abode;
In truth together ye do seem
Like something fashion'd in a dream,
Such forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep!
But O fair Creature! in the light
Of common day so heavenly bright,
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,

I bless thee with a human heart:
God shield thee to thy latest years!
Thee neither know I nor thy peers,
And yet my eyes are fill'd with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away;
For never saw I mien or face
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scatter'd, like a random seed,
Remote from men, Thou dost not need
The embarrass'd look of shy distress,
And maidenly shamefacédness:
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a Mountaineer:
A face with gladness overspread;
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred;
And seemliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech:
A bondage sweetly brook'd, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life!
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful?

O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell ;
Adopt your homely ways and dress,
A shepherd, thou a shepherdess !
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality :
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea ; and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighborhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see !
Thy elder brother I would be,
Thy father—anything to thee.

Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place :
Joy have I had ; and, going hence,
I bear away my recompence.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :
Then why should I be loth to stir ?
I feel this place was made for her ;
To give new pleasure like the past,
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part ;
For I, methinks, till I grow old
As fair before me shall behold
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;
And Thee, the Spirit of them all !

William Wordsworth

THE REAPER

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago;
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again!

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,

And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listen'd, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore
Long after it was heard no more.

William Wordsworth

299* THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
Hangs a Thrush that sings loud; it has sung for three
years;

Poor Susan has pass'd by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails her? She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale
Down which she so often has tripp'd with her pail;
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven: but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade;
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colours have all pass'd away from her eyes!

William Wordsworth

Ariel to Miranda:—Take
This slave of music, for the sake
Of him who is the slave of thee;
And teach it all the harmony
In which thou canst, and only thou,
Make the delighted spirit glow,
Till joy denies itself again
And, too intense, is turn'd to pain.
For by permission and command
Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,
Poor Ariel sends this silent token
Of more than ever can be spoken:
Your guardian spirit, Ariel, who
From life to life must still pursue
Your happiness, for thus alone
Can Ariel ever find his own.
From Prospero's enchanted cell,
As the mighty verses tell,
To the throne of Naples he
Lit you o'er the trackless sea,
Flitting on, your prow before,
Like a living meteor.
When you die, the silent Moon
In her interlunar swoon
Is not sadder in her cell
Than deserted Ariel:—
When you live again on earth,
Like an unseen Star of birth
Ariel guides you o'er the sea
Of life from your nativity:—
Many changes have been run
Since Ferdinand and you begun

Your course of love, and Ariel still
Has track'd your steps and served your will.
Now in humbler, happier lot,
This is all remembered not ;
And now, alas ! the poor Sprite is
Imprison'd for some fault of his
In a body like a grave—
From you he only dares to crave,
For his service and his sorrow
A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought
To echo all harmonious thought,
Fell'd a tree, while on the steep
The woods were in their winter sleep,
Rock'd in that repose divine
On the wind-swept Apennine ;
And dreaming, some of Autumn past,
And some of Spring approaching fast,
And some of April buds and showers,
And some of songs in July bowers,
And all of love : and so this tree,—
Oh that such our death may be !—
Died in sleep, and felt no pain,
To live in happier form again ;
From which, beneath heaven's fairest star,
The artist wrought this loved Guitar,
And taught it justly to reply
To all who question skilfully
In language gentle as thine own ;
Whispering in enamour'd tone
Sweet oracles of woods and dells,
And summer winds in sylvan cells :
—For it had learnt all harmonies

Of the plains and of the skies,
Of the forests and the mountains,
And the many-voicéd fountains;
The clearest echoes of the hills,
The softest notes of falling rills,
The melodies of birds and bees,
The murmuring of summer seas,
And pattering rain, and breathing dew,
And airs of evening; and it knew
That seldom-heard mysterious sound
Which, driven on its diurnal round,
As it floats through boundless day,
Our world enkindles on its way.
—All this it knows, but will not tell
To those who cannot question well
The Spirit that inhabits it;
It talks according to the wit
Of its companions; and no more
Is heard than has been felt before
By those who tempt it to betray
These secrets of an elder day.
But, sweetly as its answers will
Flatter hands of perfect skill,
It keeps its highest, holiest tone
For our beloved Jane alone.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I wander'd lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,

Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay :
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee :—
A Poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company !
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought ;

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye,
Which is the bliss of solitude ;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

William Wordsworth

TO THE DAISY

With little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world lie,
Sweet Daisy ! oft I talk to thee

For thou art worthy,
Thou unassuming Common-place
Of Nature, with that homely face,

And yet with something of a grace
Which Love makes for thee!

Oft on the dappled turf at ease
I sit and play with similes,
Loose types of things through all degrees,
Thoughts of thy raising;
And many a fond and idle name
I give to thee, for praise or blame
As is the humour of the game,
While I am gazing.

A nun demure, of lowly port;
Or sprightly maiden of Love's court,
In thy simplicity the sport
Of all temptations;
A queen in crown of rubies drest;
A starveling in a scanty vest:
Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye
Staring to threaten and defy,
That thought comes next—and instantly
The freak is over,
The shape will vanish, and behold!
A silver shield with boss of gold
That spreads itself, some faery bold
In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar—
And then thou are a pretty star,
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee!

Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest;—
 May peace come never to his nest
 Who shall reprove thee!

Sweet Flower! for by that name at last
 When all my reveries are past
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
 Sweet silent Creature!
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
 My heart with gladness, and a share
 Of thy meek nature!
William Wordsworth

303*

ODE TO AUTUMN

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
 Conspiring with him how to load and bless
 With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
 To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
 To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
 With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
 And still more, later flowers for the bees,
 Until they think warm days will never cease,
 For Summer has o'erbrimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;

Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them; thou hast thy music too,—
While barr'd clouds bloom the soft-dying day
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river-sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

John Keats.

304*

ODE TO WINTER

Germany, December, 1800

When first the fiery-mantled Sun
His heavenly race began to run,
Round the earth and ocean blue
His children four, the Seasons, flew.

First, in green apparel dancing,
The young Spring smiled with angel-grace;
Rosy Summer next advancing,
Rush'd into her sire's embrace—

Her bright-hair'd sire, who bade her keep
For ever nearest to his smiles,
On Calpe's olive-shaded steep
Or India's citron-cover'd isles;
More remote, and buxom-brown,
The Queen of vintage bow'd before his throne;
A rich pomegranate gemm'd her crown,
A ripe sheaf bound her zone.

But howling Winter fled afar
To hills that prop the polar star;
And loves on deer-borne car to ride
With barren darkness by his side,
Round the shore where loud Lofoden
Whirls to death the roaring whale,
Round the hall where Runic Odin
Howls his war-song to the gale;
Save when adown the ravaged globe
He travels on his native storm,
Deflowering Nature's grassy robe
And trampling on her faded form:—
Till light's returning Lord assume
The shaft that drives him to his polar field,
Of power to pierce his raven plume
And crystal-cover'd shield.

Oh, sire of storms! whose savage ear
The Lapland drum delights to hear,
When Frenzy with her blood-shot eye
Implores thy dreadful deity—
Archangel! Power of desolation!
Fast descending as thou art,
Say, hath mortal invocation
Spells to touch thy stormy heart?

Then, sullen Winter! hear my prayer,
And gently rule the ruin'd year;
Nor chill the wanderer's bosom bare
Nor freeze the wretch's falling tear;
To shuddering Want's unmantled bed
Thy horror-breathing agues cease to lend,
And gently on the orphan head
Of Innocence descend.

But chiefly spare, O king of clouds!
The sailor on his airy shrouds,
When wrecks and beacons strew the steep,
And spectres walk along the deep.
Milder yet thy snowy breezes
Pour on yonder tented shores,
Where the Rhine's broad billow freezes
Or the dark-brown Danube roars.
Oh, winds of Winter! list ye there
To many a deep and dying groan?
Or start, ye demons of the midnight air,
At shrieks and thunders louder than your own?
Alas! ev'n your unhallow'd breath
May spare the victim fallen low;
But Man will ask no truce to death,—
No bounds to human woe.

Thomas Campbell

From Stirling Castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravell'd,
Had trod the banks of Clyde and Tay
And with the Tweed had travell'd;
And when we came to Clovenford,

Then said my “winsome Marrow,”
“Whate’er betide, we’ll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow.”

“Let Yarrow folk, frae Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling,
Go back to Yarrow, ’tis their own,
Each maiden to her dwelling!
On Yarrow’s banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow;
But we will downward with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

“There’s Gala Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us;
And Dryburgh, where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus;
There’s pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow:
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow?

“What’s Yarrow but a river bare
That glides the dark hills under?
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder.”
—Strange words they seem’d of slight and scorn;
My True-love sigh’d for sorrow,
And look’d me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow!

“O green,” said I, “are Yarrow’s holms,
And sweet is Yarrow flowing!
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,

But we will leave it growing.
O'er hilly path and open strath
We'll wander Scotland thorough;
But, though so near, we will not turn
Into the dale of Yarrow.

"Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow;
The swan on still Saint Mary's Lake
Float double, swan and shadow!
We will not see them; will not go
To-day, nor yet to-morrow;
Enough if in our hearts we know
There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown!
It must, or we shall rue it:
We have a vision of our own,
Ah! why should we undo it?
The treasured dreams of times long past,
We'll keep them, winsome Marrow!
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,
'Twill be another Yarrow!

"If Care with freezing years should come
And wandering seem but folly,—
Should we be loth to stir from home,
And yet be melancholy;
Should life be dull, and spirits low,—
'Twill sooth us in our sorrow
That earth has something yet to show,
The bonny holms of Yarrow!"

William Wordsworth

306*

YARRÓW VISITED

September, 1814

And is this—Yarrow?—This the stream
Of which my fancy cherish'd
So faithfully a waking dream,
An image that hath perish'd?
O that some minstrel's harp were near
To utter notes of gladness
And chase this silence from the air,
That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows
With uncontroll'd meanderings;
Nor have these eyes by greener hills
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
Is visibly delighted,
For not a feature of those hills
Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow Vale,
Save where that pearly whiteness
Is round the rising sun diffused,
A tender hazy brightness;
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes
All profitless dejection,
Though not unwilling here to admit
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?
His bed perchance was yon smooth mound
On which the herd is feeding;

And haply from this crystal pool,
Now peaceful as the morning,
The Water-wraith ascended thrice
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the lay that sings
The haunts of happy lovers,
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers;
And pity sanctifies the verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,
The unconquerable strength of love;
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation:
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy;
The grace of forest charms decay'd
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature;
And rising from those lofty groves
Behold a ruin hoary,
The shatter'd front of Newark's towers,
Renown'd in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in,

For manhood to enjoy his strength,
And age to wear away in!
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts that nestle there—
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet on this autumnal day
The wild-wood fruits to gather,
And on my True-love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather!
And what if I enwreathed my own?
'Twere no offence to reason:
The sober hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;
A ray of Fancy still survives—
Her sunshine plays upon thee!
Thy ever-youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure,
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe
Accordant to the measure.

The vapours linger round the heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
Sad thought! which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow!
Will dwell with me, to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

William Wordsworth.

THE INVITATION

Best and brightest, come away,—
Fairer far than this fair Day,
Which, like thee, to those in sorrow
Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow
To the rough year, just awake
In its cradle on the brake.
The brightest hour of unborn Spring,
Through the winter wandering,
Found, it seems, the halcyon morn
To hoar February born ;
Bending from heaven, in azure mirth,
It kiss'd the forehead of the earth,
And smiled upon the silent sea,
And bade the frozen streams be free,
And waked to music all their fountains,
And breathed upon the frozen mountains,
And, like a prophetess of May,
Strew'd flowers upon the barren way,
Making the wintry world appear
Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

Away, away, from men and towns,
To the wild wood and the downs—
To the silent wilderness,
Where the soul need not repress
Its music, lest it should not find
An echo in another's mind,
While the touch of Nature's art
Harmonizes heart to heart.

Radiant Sister of the Day,
Awake! arise! and come away!

To the wild woods and the plains,
To the pools where winter rains
Image all their roof of leaves,
Where the pine its garland weaves
Of sapless green and ivy dun
Round stems that never kiss the sun;
Where the lawns and pastures be
And the sandhills of the sea;
Where the melting hoar-frost wets
The daisy-star that never sets;
And wind-flowers and violets,
Which yet join not scent to hue,
Crown the pale year weak and new;
When the night is left behind
In the deep east, dim and blind,
And the blue noon is over us,
And the multitudinous
Billows murmur at our feet,
Where the earth and ocean meet,
And all things seem only one
In the universal Sun.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

308*

THE RECOLLECTION

Now the last day of many days,
All beautiful and bright as thou,
The loveliest and the last, is dead:
Rise, Memory, and write its praise!
Up—to thy wonted work! come, trace
The epitaph of glory fled,
For now the earth has changed its face,
A frown is on the heaven's brow.

We wander'd to the Pine Forest
That skirts the Ocean's foam ;
The lightest wind was in its nest,
The tempest in its home.
The whispering waves were half asleep,
The clouds were gone to play,
And on the bosom of the deep
The smile of heaven lay ;
It seem'd as if the hour were one
Sent from beyond the skies,
Which scatter'd from above the sun
A light of Paradise !

We paused amid the pines that stood
The giants of the waste,
Tortured by storms to shapes as rude
As serpents interlaced,
And soothed by every azure breath
That under heaven is blown,
To harmonies and hues beneath,
As tender as its own ;
Now all the tree-tops lay asleep
Like green waves on the sea,
As still as in the silent deep
The ocean-woods may be.

How calm it was!—The silence there
By such a chain was bound
That even the busy woodpecker
Made stiller with her sound
The inviolable quietness ;
The breath of peace we drew
With its soft motion made not less
The calm that round us grew.

There seem'd, from the remotest seat
Of the white mountain waste
To the soft flower beneath our feet,
A magic circle traced,—
A spirit interfused around,
A thrilling silent life;
To momentary peace it bound
Our mortal nature's strife;—
And still I felt the centre of
The magic circle there
Was one fair form, that fill'd with love
The lifeless atmosphere.

We paused beside the pools that lie
Under the forest bough;
Each seem'd as 'twere a little sky
Gulf'd in a world below:
A firmament of purple light
Which in the dark earth lay,
More boundless than the depth of night
And purer than the day—
In which the lovely forest grew
As in the upper air,
More perfect, both in shape and hue,
Than any spreading there.
There lay the glade and neighbouring lawn,
And through the dark green wood
The white sun twinkling like the dawn
Out of a speckled cloud.
Sweet views which in our world above
Can never well be seen
Were imaged by the water's love
Of that fair forest green;

And all was interfused beneath
With an Elysian glow,
An atmosphere without a breath,
A softer day below.
Like one beloved, the scene had lent
To the dark water's breast
Its every leaf and lineament
With more than truth exprest,
Until an envious wind crept by,
Like an unwelcome thought
Which from the mind's too faithful eye
Blots one dear image out.
—Though thou art ever fair and kind,
The forests ever green,
Less oft is peace in Shelly's mind
Than calm in waters seen!

Percy Bysshe Shelley

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven is on the Sea:
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child! dear girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouch'd by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,

And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

William Wordsworth

310* SONG TO THE EVENING STAR

Star that bringest home the bee
And sett'st the weary labourer free!
If any star shed peace, 'tis Thou
That send'st it from above,
Appearing when Heaven's breath and brow
Are sweet as hers we love.

Come to the luxuriant skies,
Whilst the landscape's odours rise,
Whilst far-off lowing herds are heard
And songs when toil is done,
From cottages whose smoke unstirr'd
Curls yellow in the sun.

Star of love's soft interviews,
Parted lovers on thee muse;
Their remembrancer in Heaven
Of thrilling vows thou art,
Too delicious to be riven
By absence from the heart.

Thomas Campbell

311* DATUR HORA QUIETI

The sun upon the lake is low,
The wild birds hush their song,
The hills have evening's deepest glow,
Yet Leonard tarries long.

Now all whom varied toil and care
From home and love divide,
In the calm sunset may repair
Each to the loved one's side.

The noble dame, on turret high,
Who waits her gallant knight,
Looks to the western beam to spy
The flash of armour bright.
The village maid, with hand on brow
The level ray to shade,
Upon the footpath watches now
For Colin's darkening plaid.

Now to their mates the wild swans row,
By day they swam apart;
And to the thicket wanders slow
The hind beside the hart.
The woodlark at his partner's side
Twitters his closing song—
All meet whom day and care divide,
But Leonard tarries long!
Sir Walter Scott

TO THE MOON

Art thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,—
And ever-changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?
Percy Bysshe Shelley

313

TO SLEEP

A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky:
I've thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
Sleepless; and soon the small birds' melodies
Must hear, first utter'd from my orchard trees,
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
Even thus last night, and two nights more I lay,
And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth:
So do not let me wear to-night away:
Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth?
Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health!

William Wordsworth

314*

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM

Our bugles sang truce, for the night-cloud had lower'd,
And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky;
And thousands had sunk on the ground overpower'd,
The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain,
At the dead of the night a sweet Vision I saw,
And thrice ere the morning I dreamt it again.

Methought from the battle-field's dreadful array
Far, far, I had roam'd on a desolate track;
'Twas Autumn,—and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers, that welcomed me back.

I flew to the pleasant fields, traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young;
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore
From my home and my weeping friends never to part;
My little ones kiss'd me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobb'd aloud in her fulness of heart.

"Stay—stay with us!—rest!—thou are weary and
worn!"—

And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay;—
But sorrow return'd with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

Thomas Campbell

315* A DREAM OF THE UNKNOWN

I dream'd that as I wander'd by the way,
Bare Winter suddenly was changed to Spring,
And gentle odours led my steps astray,
Mix'd with a sound of waters murmuring,
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kiss'd it and then fled, as Thou mightest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearl'd Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxlips; tender blue-bells, at whose birth

The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cow-bind and the moonlight-colour'd may,
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups, whose wine
Was the bright dew yet drain'd not by the day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astray;
And flowers azure, black, and streak'd with gold,
Fairer than any awaken'd eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
There grew broad flag-flowers, purple prank'd with
white,
And starry river-buds among the sedge,
And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
That the same hues, which in their natural bowers
Were mingled or opposed, the like array
Kept these imprison'd children of the Hours
Within my hand,—and then, elate and gay,
I hastened to the spot whence I had come
That I might there present it—O! to Whom?

Percy Bysshe Shelley

In Xanadu did Kubla Kahn
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea;
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round;
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossom'd many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced;
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reach'd the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean;
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she play'd,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That, with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, "Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Most sweet it is with un-uplifted eyes
To pace the ground, if path be there or none,
While a fair region round the traveller lies
Which he forbears again to look upon;
Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,

The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
Of meditation, slipping in between
The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
—If Thought and Love desert us, from that day
Let us break off all commerce with the Muse:
With Thought and Love companions of our way—
Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,—
The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews
Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

William Wordsworth

Ever let the Fancy roam;
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let wingéd Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage-door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage, too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloy with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the cakéd snow is shuffled

From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
Sit thee there, and send abroad,
With a mind self-overaw'd,
Fancy, high-commission'd:—send her!
She has vassals to attend her:
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;
All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heap'd Autumn's wealth.
With a still, mysterious stealth:
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it:—thou shalt hear
Distant harvest-carols clear;
Rustle of the reap'd corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn;
And, in the same moment—hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plumed lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearléd with the self-same shower.

Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its celléd sleep ;
And the snake, all winter-thin,
Cast on sunny bank its skin ;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest ;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm ;
Acorns ripe down-pattering,
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy ! let her loose ;
Everything is spoilt by use :
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,
Too much gazed at ? Where's the maid
Whose lip mature is ever new ?
Where's the eye, however blue,
Doth not weary ? Where's the face
One would meet in every place ?
Where's the voice, however soft,
One would hear so very oft ?
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.
Let then wingéd Fancy find
Thee a mistress to thy mind :
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,
Ere the God of Torment taught her
How to frown and how to chide ;
With a waist and with a side
White as Hebe's, when her zone
Slipt its golden clasp, and down
Fell her kirtle to her feet,

While she held the goblet sweet,
And Jove grew languid.—Break the mesh
Of the Fancy's silken leash;
Quickly break her prison-string,
And such joys as these she'll bring.
—Let the wingéd Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home.

John Keats

319*

WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I heard a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What Man has made of Man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trail'd its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopp'd and play'd,
Their thoughts I cannot measure,—
But the least motion which they made
It seem'd a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;

And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What Man has made of Man?

William Wordsworth

320* RUTH: OR THE INFLUENCES OF
 NATURE

When Ruth was left half desolate,
Her father took another mate;
And Ruth, not seven years old,
A slighted child, at her own will
Went wandering over dale and hill,
In thoughtless freedom, bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,
And music from that pipe could draw
Like sounds of winds and floods;
Had built a bower upon the green,
As if she from her birth had been
An infant of the woods.

Beneath her father's roof, alone
She seem'd to live; her thoughts her own;
Herself her own delight:
Pleased with herself, nor sad nor gay;
And passing thus the live-long day,
She grew to woman's height.

There came a youth from Georgia's shore—
A military casque he wore
With splendid feathers drest;
He brought them from the Cherokees;
The feathers nodded in the breeze
And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung:
But no! he spake the English tongue
And bore a soldier's name;
And, when America was free
From battle and from jeopardy,
He 'cross the ocean came.

With hues of genius on his cheek,
In finest tones the youth could speak:
—While he was yet a boy
The moon, the glory of the sun,
The streams that murmur as they run
Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely youth! I guess
The panther in the wilderness
Was not so fair as he;
And when he chose to sport and play,
No dolphin ever was so gay
Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought;
And with him many tales he brought
Of pleasure and of fear;
Such tales as, told to any maid
By such a youth, in the green shade,
Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls, a happy rout!
Who quit their fold with dance and shout,
Their pleasant Indian town,
To gather strawberries all day long,
Returning with a choral song
When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants that hourly change
Their blossoms, through a boundless range
Of intermingling hues;
With budding, fading, faded flowers,
They stand the wonder of the bowers
From morn to evening dews.

He told of the magnolia, spread
High as a cloud, high over head!
The cypress and her spire;
—Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam
Cover a hundred leagues, and seem
To set the hills on fire.

The youth of green savannahs spake,
And many an endless, endless lake
With all its fairy crowds
Of islands, that together lie
As quietly as spots of sky
Among the evening clouds.

“How pleasant,” then he said, “it were
A fisher or a hunter there,
In sunshine or in shade
To wander with an easy mind,
And build a household fire, and find
A home in every glade!

“What days and what bright years! Ah, me!
Our life were life indeed, with thee
So pass’d in quiet bliss;
And all the while,” said he, “to know
That we were in a world of woe,
On such an earth as this!”

And then he sometimes interwove
Fond thoughts about a father’s love;
“For there,” said he, “are spun
Around the heart such tender ties,
That our own children to our eyes
Are dearer than the sun.

“Sweet Ruth! and could you go with me
My helpmate in the woods to be,
Our shed at night to rear,
Or run, my own adopted bride,
A sylvan huntress at my side,
And drive the flying deer!

“Beloved Ruth!”—No more he said.
The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed
A solitary tear:
She thought again—and did agree
With him to sail across the sea,
And drive the flying deer.

“And now, as fitting is and right,
We in the church our faith will plight,
A husband and a wife.”
Even so they did; and I may say
That to sweet Ruth that happy day
Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,
Delighted all the while to think
That, on those lonesome floods
And green savannahs, she should share
His board with lawful joy, and bear
His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told,
This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,
And with his dancing crest
So beautiful, through savage lands
Had roam'd about, with vagrant bands
Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,
The tumult of a tropic sky
Might well be dangerous food
For him, a youth to whom was given
So much of earth—so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found
Irregular in sight or sound
Did to his mind impart
A kindred impulse, seem'd allied
To his own powers, and justified
The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,
The beauteous forms of Nature wrought,—
Fair trees and gorgeous flowers;
The breezes their own languor lent;
The stars had feelings, which they sent
Into those favour'd bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits, I ween
That sometimes there did intervene
Pure hopes of high intent;
For passions link'd to forms so fair
And stately, needs must have their share
Of noble sentiment.

But ill he lived, much evil saw,
With men to whom no better law
Nor better life was known;
Deliberately and undeceived,
Those wild men's vices he received,
And gave them back his own.

His genius and his moral frame
Were thus impair'd, and he became
The slave of low desires:
A man who without self-control
Would seek what the degraded soul
Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feign'd delight
Had woo'd the maiden, day and night
Had loved her, night and morn:
What could he less than love a maid
Whose heart with so much nature play'd—
So kind and so forlorn?

Sometimes most earnestly he said,
"O Ruth! I have been worse than dead;
False thoughts, thoughts bold and vain
Encompass'd me on every side
When I, in confidence and pride,
Had cross'd the Atlantic main.

“Before me shone a glorious world
Fresh as a banner bright, unfurl’d
To music suddenly :
I look’d upon those hills and plains,
And seem’d as if let loose from chains
To live at liberty !

“No more of this—for now, by thee,
Dear Ruth, more happily set free,
With nobler zeal I burn ;
My soul from darkness is released,
Like the whole sky when to the east
The morning doth return.”

Full soon that better mind was gone ;
No hope, no wish remain’d, not one,—
They stirr’d him now no more ;
New objects did not pleasure give,
And once again he wish’d to live
As lawless as before.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,
They for the voyage were prepared,
And went to the sea-shore ;
But, when they thither came, the youth
Deserted his poor bride, and Ruth
Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth !—Such pains she had
That she in half a year was mad
And in a prison housed ;
And there, with many a doleful song
Made of wild words, her cup of wrong
She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,
Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew,
Nor pastimes of the May,
—They all were with her in her cell;
And a clear brook with cheerful knell
Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,
There came a respite to her pain;
She from her prison fled;
But of the Vagrant none took thought;
And where it liked her best she sought
Her shelter and her bread.

Among the fields she breathed again;
The master-current of her brain
Ran permanent and free;
And, coming to the banks of Tone,
There did she rest; and dwell alone
Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools
That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,
And airs that gently stir
The vernal leaves—she loved them still,
Nor ever taxed them with the ill
Which had been done to her.

A barn her Winter bed supplies;
But, till the warmth of Summer skies
And Summer days is gone,
(And all do in this tale agree)
She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,
And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray !
And Ruth will, long before her day,
Be broken down and old.
Sore aches she needs must have ! but less
Of mind, than body's wretchedness,
From damp, and rain, and cold.

If she is prest by want of food,
She from her dwelling in the wood
Repairs to a road-side ;
And there she begs at one steep place,
Where up and down with easy pace
The horsemen-travellers ride.

That oaten pipe of hers is mute
Or thrown away ; but with a flute
Her loneliness she cheers ;
This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,
At evening in his homeward walk
The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have pass'd her on the hills
Setting her little water-mills
By spouts and fountains wild—
Such small machinery as she turn'd
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourn'd,—
A young and happy child !

Farewell ! and when thy days are told,
Ill-fated Ruth ! in hallow'd mould
Thy corpse shall buried be ;
For thee a funeral bell shall ring,
And all the congregation sing
A Christian psalm for thee.

William Wordsworth

321*

WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS

Many a green isle needs must be
In the deep, wide sea of Misery,
Or the mariner, worn and wan,
Never thus could voyage on,
Day and night, and night and day,
Drifting on his dreary way,
With the solid darkness black
Closing round his vessel's track;
Whilst above, the sunless sky
Big with clouds, hangs heavily,
And behind the tempest fleet
Hurries on with lightning feet,
Riving sail, and cord, and plank,
Till the ship has almost drank
Death from the o'er-brimming deep;
And sinks down, down, like that sleep
When the dreamer seems to be
Weltering through eternity;
And the dim, low line before
Of a dark and distant shore
Still recedes, as ever still
Longing with divided will,
But no power to seek or shun,
He is ever drifted on
O'er the unrepousing wave,
To the haven of the grave.

Ah, many flowering islands lie
In the waters of wide Agony:
To such a one this morn was led
My bark, by soft winds piloted.

—'Mid the mountains Euganean
I stood listening to the paeon
With which the legion'd rooks did hail
The Sun's uprise majestic:
Gathering round with wings all hoar,
Through the dewy mist they soar
Like gray shades, till the eastern heaven
Bursts; and then,—as clouds of even
Fleck'd with fire and azure, lie
In the unfathomable sky,—
So their plumes of purple grain,
Starr'd with drops of golden rain,
Gleam above the sunlight woods,
As in silent multitudes
On the morning's fitful gale
Through the broken mist they sail;
And the vapours cloven and gleaming
Follow down the dark steep streaming,
Till all is bright, and clear, and still
Round the solitary hill.

Beneath is spread like a green sea
The waveless plain of Lombardy,
Bounded by the vaporous air,
Islanded by cities fair;
Underneath Day's azure eyes,
Ocean's nursling, Venice lies,—
A peopled labyrinth of walls,
Amphitrite's destined halls,
Which her hoary sire now paves
With his blue and beaming waves.
Lo! the sun upsprings behind,
Broad, red, radiant, half-reclined
On the level quivering line

Of the waters crystalline ;
And before that chasm of light,
As within a furnace bright,
Column, tower, and dome, and spire,
Shine like obelisks of fire,
Pointing with inconstant motion
From the altar of dark ocean
To the sapphire-tinted skies,
As the flames of sacrifice
From the marble shrines did rise,
As to pierce the dome of gold
Where Apollo spoke of old.

Sun-girt City ! thou hast been
Ocean's child, and then his queen ;
Now is come a darker day,
And thou soon must be his prey,
If the power that raised thee here
Hallow so thy watery bier.
A less drear ruin than than now,
With thy conquest-branded brow
Stooping to the slave of slaves
From thy throne among the waves
Wilt thou be,—when the sea-mew
Flies, as once before it flew,
O'er thine isles depopulate,
And all is in its ancient state,
Save where many a palace-gate
With green sea-flowers overgrown,
Like a rock of ocean's own,
Topples o'er the abandon'd sea
As the tides change sullenly.
The fisher on his watery way
Wandering at the close of day,

Will spread his sail and seize his oar
Till he pass the gloomy shore,
Lest thy dead should, from this sleep,
Bursting o'er the starlight deep,
Lead a rapid masque of death
O'er the waters of his path.

Noon descends around me now:
'Tis the noon of autumn's glow,
When a soft and purple mist
Like a vaporous amethyst,
Or an air-dissolvéd star
Mingling light and fragrance, far
From the curved horizon's bound
To the point of heaven's profound,
Fills the overflowing sky
And the plains that silent lie
Underneath; the leaves unsodden
Where the infant Frost has trodden
With his morning-wingéd feet
Whose bright print is gleaming yet;
And the red and golden vines
Piercing with their trellised lines
The rough, dark-skirted wilderness;
The dun and bladed grass no less,
Pointed from this hoary tower
In the windless air; the flower
Glimmering at my feet; the line
Of the olive-sandall'd Appennine
In the south dimly islanded;
And the Alps, whose snows are spread
High between the clouds and sun;
And of living things each one;

And my spirit, which so long
Darken'd this swift stream of song,—
Interpenetrated lie
By the glory of the sky;
Be it love, light, harmony,
Odour, or the soul of all
Which from heaven like dew doth fall,
Or the mind which feeds this verse,
Peopling the lone universe.

Noon descends, and after noon
Autumn's evening meets me soon,
Leading the infantine moon
And that one star, which to her
Almost seems to minister
Half the crimson light she brings
From the sunset's radiant springs:
And the soft dreams of the morn
(Which like wingéd winds had borne
To that silent isle, which lies
'Mid remember'd agonies,
The frail bark of this lone being),
Pass, to other sufferers fleeing,
And its ancient pilot, Pain,
Sits beside the helm again.

Other flowering isles must be
In the sea of Life and Agony;
Other spirits float and flee
O'er that gulf; Ev'n now, perhaps,
On some rock the wild wave wraps
With folded wings they waiting sit
For my bark, to pilot it

To some calm and blooming cove;
Where for me, and those I love,
May a windless bower be built,
Far from passion, pain, and guilt,
In a dell 'mid lawny hills
Which the wild sea-murmur fills,
And soft sunshine, and the sound
Of old forests echoing round,
And the light and smell divine
Of all flowers that breathe and shine.
—We may live so happy there
That the Spirits of the Air
Envyng us, may ev'n entice
To our healing paradise
The polluting multitude:
But their rage would be subdued
By that clime divine and calm,
And the winds whose wings rain balm
On the uplifted soul, and leaves
Under which the bright sea heaves;
While each breathless interval
In their whisperings musical
The inspired soul supplies
With its own deep melodies;
And the Love which heals all strife,
Circling, like the breath of life,
All things in that sweet abode
With its own mild brotherhood:—
They, not it, would change; and soon
Every sprite beneath the moon
Would repent its envy vain,
And the Earth grow young again.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

322

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

O Wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
The wingéd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:
Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and Preserver: Hear, oh hear!

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's com-
motion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,
Angels of rain and lightning! there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
Of some fierce Maenad, ev'n from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height—
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: Oh hear!

Thou who didst waken from his summer-dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,

Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams,
Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods, which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear
And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh hear!

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than Thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seem'd a vision,—I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer, in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bow'd
One too like thee—tameless, and swift, and proud.

Make me thy lyre, ev'n as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like wither'd leaves, to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips, to unawaken'd earth,
The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

Percy Bysshe Shelley

323

NATURE AND THE POET

*Suggested by a Picture of Peele Castle in a Storm,
painted by Sir George Beaumont*

I was thy neighbour once, thou rugged Pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:
I saw thee every day; and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
So like, so very like, was day to day!
Whene'er I look'd, thy image still was there;
It trembled, but it never pass'd away.

How perfect was the calm! It seem'd no sleep,
No mood, which season takes away, or brings:
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah! then—if mine had been the painter's hand
To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,
The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream,—

I would have planted thee, thou hoary pile,
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile,
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seem'd a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven;—
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife:
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze;
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such picture would I at that time have made;
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betray'd.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more;
I have submitted to a new control:
A power is gone which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanized my soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been:
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would have been the friend
If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend:
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate work!—yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;
That hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
—Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time—
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

—Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind!
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied, for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here:—
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

William Wordsworth

324*

THE POET'S DREAM

On a Poet's lips I slept,
Dreaming like a love-adept
In the sound his breathing kept;
Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,
But feeds on the ærial kisses
Of shapes that haunt Thought's wildernesses.
He will watch from dawn to gloom
The lake-reflected sun illumine
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,
Nor heed nor see what things they be—

But from these create he can
Forms more real than living Man,
Nurslings of Immortality!

Percy Bysshe Shelley

325* GLEN-ALMAIN, THE NARROW GLEN

In this still place, remote from men,
Sleeps Ossian, in the Narrow Glen ;
In this still place, where murmurs on
But one meek streamlet, only one.
He sang of battles, and the breath
Of stormy war, and violent death ;
And should, methinks, when all was past,
Have rightfully been laid at last
Where rocks were rudely heap'd and rent
As by a spirit turbulent ;
Where sights were rough, and sounds were wild,
And everything unreconciled ;
In some complaining, dim retreat,
For fear and melancholy meet ;
But this is calm ; there cannot be
A more entire tranquility.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed ?
Or is it but a groundless creed ?
What matters it ?—I blame them not
Whose fancy in this lonely spot
Was moved ; and in such way express'd
Their notion of its perfect rest.
A convent, even a hermit's cell.
Would break the silence of this Dell :
It is not quiet, is not ease ;

But something deeper far than these :
The separation that is here
Is of the grave ; and of austere
Yet happy feelings of the dead :
And, therefore, was it rightly said
That Ossian, last of all his race !
Lies buried in this lonely place .

William Wordsworth.

326*

The World is too much with us ; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers ;
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours
And are up-gather'd now like sleeping flowers,
For this, for every thing, we are out of tune ;
It moves us not,—Great God ! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,—
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

William Wordsworth.

327 WITHIN KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,
 CAMBRIDGE

Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense,
With ill-match'd aims, the Architect who plann'd
(Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white-robed Scholars only) this immense

And glorious work of fine intelligence!
—Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more: —
So deem'd the man who fashion'd for the sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof,
Self-poised and scoop'd into ten thousand cells
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering—and wandering on as loth to die;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

William Wordsworth.

328

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempé or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on:
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe, to the spirit, ditties of no tone.
Fair youth beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,

Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve :
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair !

Ah, happy, happy boughs ! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu ;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new ;
More happy love ! more happy, happy love !
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young ;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice ?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest ?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn ?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be ; and not a soul, to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape ! Fair attitude ! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed ;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity. Cold Pastoral !
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
 "Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

John Keats

Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,
 Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
 Both were mine! Life went a-maying
 With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
 When I was young!
 When I was young?—Ah, woful *when!*
 Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then.
 This breathing house not built with hands,
 This body that does me grievous wrong,
 O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands
 How lightly then it flash'd along:
 Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
 On winding lakes and rivers wide,
 That ask no aid of sail or oar,
 That fear no spite of wind or tide!
 Nought cared this body for wind or weather
 When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
 Friendship is a sheltering tree;
 O! the joys, that came down shower-like,
 Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
 Ere I was old!
 Ere I was old? Ah woful *Ere*,
 Which tells me Youth's no longer here!
 O Youth! for years so many and sweet

'Tis known that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be that Thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd:—
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on
To make believe that Thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this alter'd size:
But Springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but Thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve
When we are old:

—That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest
That may not rudely be dismiss,
Yet hath out-stay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

We walk'd along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun;
And Matthew stopp'd, he look'd, and said
"The will of God be done!"

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering gray ;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass
And by the steaming rills
We travell'd merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

“Our work,” said I, “was well begun ;
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought ?”

A second time did Matthew stop ;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply :

“Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this, which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

“And just above yon slope of corn
Such colours, and no other,
Were in the sky that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

“With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, to the church-yard come, stopp'd short
Beside my daughter's grave.

“Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale;
And then she sang,—she would have been
A very nightingale.

“Six feet in earth my Emma lay;
And yet I loved her more—
For so it seem’d,—than till that day
I e’er had loved before.

“And turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the churchyard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

“A basket on her head she bare;
Her brow was smooth and white:
To see a child so very fair
It was a pure delight!

“No fountain from its rocky cave
E’er tripp’d with foot so free;
She seem’d as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

“There came from me a sigh of pain,
Which I could ill confine;
I look’d at her, and look’d again:—
And did not wish her mine!”

—Matthew is in his grave, yet now
Methinks I see him stand
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

William Wordsworth

THE FOUNTAIN

A Conversation

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat;
And from the turf a fountain broke
And gurgled at our feet.

“Now, Matthew!” said I, “let us match
This water’s pleasant tune
With some old border-song or catch
That suits a summer’s noon;

“Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made!”

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree;
And thus the dear old man replied
The gray-hair’d man of glee:

“No check, no stay this Streamlet fears,
How merrily it goes!
’Twill murmur on a thousand years
And flow as now it flows.

“And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain’s brink.

“My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirr’d,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

“Thus fares it still in our decay :
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what Age takes away,
Than what it leaves behind.

“The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

“With Nature never do they wage
A foolish strife ; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free :

“But we are press’d by heavy laws ;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

“If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,—
It is the man of mirth.

“My days, my friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me; but by none
Am I enough beloved.”

“Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains!
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains:

“And Matthew, for thy children dead
I’ll be a son to thee!”
At this he grasp’d my hand and said,
“Alas! that cannot be.”

—We rose up from the fountain-side;
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide;
And through the wood we went;

And ere we came to Leonard’s rock
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock
And the bewilder’d chimes.

William Wordsworth

The more we live, more brief appear
Our life’s succeeding stages:
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.

The gladsome current of our youth,
Ere passion yet disorders,
Steals lingering like a river smooth
Along its grassy borders.

But as the care-worn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker,
Ye Stars that measure life to man,
Why seem your courses quicker?

When joys have lost their bloom and breath
And life itself is vapid,
Why, as we reach the Falls of Death,
Feel we its tide more rapid?

It may be strange—yet who would change
Time's course to slower speeding,
When one by one our friends have gone
And left our bosoms bleeding?

Heaven gives our years of fading strength
Indemnifying fleetness;
And those of youth, a seeming length,
Proportion'd to their sweetness.

Thomas Campbell

Four Seasons fill the measure of the year;
There are four seasons in the mind of man:
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span;
He has his Summer, when luxuriously

Spring's honey'd eud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto heaven. Quiet coves
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furlleth close; contented so to look
On mists in idleness—to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

John Keats

334

A DIRGE

Rough wind, that moanest loud
Grief too sad for song:
Wild wind, when sullen cloud
Knells all the night long;
Sad storm whose tears are vain,
Bare woods whose branches strain,
Deep caves and dreary main,—
Wail for the world's wrong!

Percy Bysshe Shelley

335

THRENOS

O. World! O Life! O Time!
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—Oh, never more!

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight:

Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar
 Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
 No more—Oh, never more!

Percy Bysshe Shelley

336

THE TROSACHS

There's not a nook within this solemn Pass,
 But were an apt confessional for One
 Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,
 That Life is but a tale of morning grass
 Wither'd at eve. From scenes of art which chase
 That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes
 Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities:
 Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than glass
 Untouch'd, unbreathed upon:—Thrice happy quest,
 If from a golden perch of aspen spray
 (October's workmanship to rival May),
 The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
 That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,
 Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!

William Wordsworth

337*

My heart leaps up when I behold
 A rainbow in the sky:
 So was it when my life began,
 So is it now I am a man,
 So be it when I shall grow old,
 Or let me die!
 The Child is father of the Man:
 And I could wish my days to be
 Bound each to each by natural piety.

William Wordsworth

338 ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY,
FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY
CHILDHOOD.

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight

To me did seem

Apparell'd in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

It is not now as it hath been of yore;—

Turn wheresoe'er I may,

By night or day,

The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

The rainbow comes and goes;

And lovely is the rose;

The moon doth with delight

Look round her when the heavens are bare;

Waters on a starry night

Are beautiful and fair;

The sunshine is a glorious birth;

But yet I know, where'er I go,

That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,

And while the young lambs bound

As to the tabor's sound,

To me alone there came a thought of grief;

A timely utterance gave that thought relief,

And I again am strong.

The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;—

No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:

I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,

The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,

And all the earth is gay ;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday ;—
Thou child of joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy !

Ye blesséd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make ; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
Oh evil day ! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning
This sweet May-morning ;
And the children are culling
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm
And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !
—But there's a tree, of many, one,
A single field which I have look'd upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone ;
The pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat :
Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
Where it is now, the glory and the dream ?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting ;
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,

Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar ;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy ;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended ;
At length the Man perceives it die away
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind ;
And, even with something of a mother's mind
And no unworthy aim,
The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate, Man,
Forget the glories he hath known
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size !
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes !
See at his feet some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,

Shaped by himself with newly-learnéd art:
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral;
 And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song.
 Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the persons, down to palsied Age,
That life brings with her in her equipage,—
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy soul's immensity;
Thou blest philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal Mind,—
 Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
 On whom those truths do rest
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,

Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction—not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest:
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast;—

—Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings,
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised;

But for those first affections,

Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing,

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,

To perish never;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,

Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather
Thought inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither—
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then, sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We, in thought, will join your throng
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind:
In the primal sympathy
Which, having been, must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death;
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forbode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;

I only have relinquish'd one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway :
I love the brooks which down their channels fret
Even more than when I tripp'd lightly as they ;
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
Is lovely yet ;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

William Wordsworth.

339*

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heap'd for the beloved's bed ;
And so thy thoughts, when Thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

NOTES

BOOK ONE

1

The noteworthy qualities in this spring song are the frequent repetitions of the rhyming sounds, the gaiety of the movement, and the large number of pictures flashed upon the canvas. Let your mind fill in the details of these pictures and try to catch the joyful mood of the poet.

Read in a sprightly manner, stressing the rhyme-words and endeavoring to suggest the birds' song in the last verse.

2

This song is sung by the fairy Ariel in "The Tempest." He is about to be liberated from service to a magician; he sings this snatch of song in joyful prospect of deliverance. Notice the frequency with which the "i"-sound occurs in the rhyme. Notice also the alliteration in lines 3 and 7. This all makes for lightness of sound and movement. Notice the change of movement at the beginning of the sixth line: the trochaic metre is changed to the dactyllic. Both are gay movements, but the latter is more lively.

Read lightly and rapidly, trying to express the joy of the fairy.

3

Another song from "The Tempest." Ariel is drawing Prince Ferdinand along by magic music. The last part

of the song is meant to be somewhat nonsensical. The barking of the dog and the crowing of the cock were probably intended to come from back of the stage, thus confusing Ferdinand and suggesting supernatural agencies.

Notice how the movement of the lines suggest the wild, irregular dancing of fairies. The first line moves swiftly and rhythmically, the accent falling on every other syllable:

Come' un-to' these yel'-low sands'.

But in the next line the movement is slow and stately, as if the dancers were almost walking:

And then take hands.

The third line is rapid again, the fourth slow. Then the tempo grows more rapid and irregular, as if the dancers were whirling through some intricate measure. Notice also the alliteration, which makes the stressed syllables yet more emphatic and suggests the strict tempo of dance music:

Curtsied when you have and kissed

The wild waves whist

Foot it featly

The burthen bear

The strain of strutting chantieer

Line 4 probably means "kissed the waves into silence."

4

This poem is divided into four sections: summons to the sun; statement of what this day means to the poet; invocation to the sun ("Fair King"), to Flora, and the winds; the poet's expectation of his mistress.

Observe the irregularity in length of line and the complicated rhyme-scheme. Observe how the meaning is

carried over from verse to verse and how long some of the sentences are. Observe also the beautiful, highly-colored pictures.

In reading aloud try to express the grace and dignity of the poem. Let the voice linger on the strong, picturesque phrases, and run rapidly over the unemphatic ones. Read the ideas as sentences, not as lines; and let the long, flowing sentences rise at the end to a climax. Read in a tone that is somewhat loud and deep and sustained, occasionally varying this as the meaning and movement suggest. For example: the third section begins rather low and works up to a climax in the line "Did once thy heart surprise." From this on to the end of the section the tone is level and smooth; and when the fourth section begins, it is very soft and subdued. The lyric, when well read, is full of pomp, yet full of beautiful musical effects as the sound rises and falls and the movement flows and ebbs.

This poem contains several references to mythology, which must be looked up before the student attempts to read aloud.

5

Shakespeare's sonnets are remarkable for their intellectual content, their emotional intensity, and their felicity of phrasing. In studying them it is well, first of all, to get the meaning.

The main thought of this sonnet is easy to grasp: it is, that since time changes everything, it will take his love (his friend) away. *sometime*: former. *store*: quantity. *state*: condition. *confounded*: ruined. *Eternal* modifies "brass." The third line of the second quatrain means, that the firm soil wins land from the ocean. The antecedent of *which*, in line 13, is "thought."

Examine the phraseology and see how picturesque and forcible it is: "Time's fell hand;" "rich proud cost" ("rich" is almost an adverb here, modifying "proud"); "outworn, buried age;" "hungry ocean;" "kingdom of the shore."

Now read the poem aloud. Remember that the thought is not finished until the end of the twelfth line, though of course you will make a brief pause after each clause. Work up to a climax and put much stress on "Love" in line 13. Bring out the contrasts in the second quatrain and in the first two lines of the third quatrain. Endeavor to make the whole thought as well as the details intelligible.

But we are not through with our study yet. Shakespeare must have employed all his artistic skill in polishing these sonnets of his, and we will do well to study after him. Read the first line, for example, and observe the beautiful combinations of sounds. Notice how "I" and "time", "have" and "hand", "fell" and "defaced" pair off and echo each other. Notice also the fainter vowel echoes in "when" and "fell", and the consonant echoes in "seen", "Time's", and "defaced." Read the whole line again and listen to the musical flow of the sounds. Now read the poem through, a line at a time, lingering over those that fall pleasantly on the ear. Almost every line will reveal some beauty of phrase. When you have done this, read the sonnet as a whole, endeavoring to express the beauty of every line and the majesty of the complete thought.

6

Same theme as in the preceding. Here the thoughts are expressed in rhetorical questions. The couplet, as

usual, adds a new idea. Notice in how many ways the same idea is expressed in these two sonnets.

The first line is elliptical; it means "Since there is no brass", etc. *but*, line 2: but that. *mortality*: death. *rage*: power—that is, death. Line 12 means "Who can keep Time from destroying Beauty, from taking spoils from it." The miracle referred to in line 13 is explained in the next line: that the poet's love shines *bright* in *black* ink—a sort of pun.

Visualize the figures of speech. In the second quatrain reconstruct the picture of the siege of a walled town. "Battering days" is a splendid figure. "Summer's honey breath" refers, of course, to the life of his friend.

Murmur over the poem line by line to get the beauty of the sounds; then read the whole sonnet, trying to bring out clearly and musically the central idea and all the details. Stress the contrasted words: "beauty" in line 3, contrasted with "brass", "stone", etc., in line 1; "hand", and "foot" in line 11; "black", and "bright" in line 14.

7

This pastoral lyric is very simple in subject matter and in form; simplicity should therefore mark the reading. The student should enter into the spirit of the selection, should visualize the pictures vividly, and should endeavor to give adequate expression to the simple, dainty, musical notes.

Notice the alliteration throughout, and the pleasant combinations of vowels and consonants. Notice the liquids in the second and other stanzas, and the feminine rhymes in the third. All this is to produce the soft, melodious undertone for which the poem is noted.

Stanza six probably did not belong in the original. The imagery is not like that in the other stanzas.

8

A gay, fanciful poem, capricious in metrical construction. The rhyme-scheme is somewhat complicated; the verses vary in length; there are several feminine rhymes; and the metre changes easily from trochaic to iambic. Read it lightly, carrying the movement on from line to line as the meaning dictates, stressing the short, emphatic lines.

fond; foolish. *fancying*; loving. *house*; abiding place, referring to the person of the poet's mistress.

9

Perhaps this lyric expresses the sentiment of a young shepherdess trying to decide between an aged suitor and a young one. It is a series of contrasts, ending with the scornful banishment of age and the passionate invitation to youth. We can imagine that the young singer is extemporizing: the irregularity of the rhyme-scheme and other characteristics bear out that impression. A student once remarked that after the line "Age, I do abhor thee," the maiden turns from her aged suitor and speaks out of a full heart to her absent sweetheart:

Youth, I do adore thee:

Oh my Love, my Love is young,

then turning her head, she calls out to the old man, who is just taking his leave:

Age, I do defy thee,

and again calls out to her sweetheart.

brave is the antonym of "bare."

Read the poem with much spirit, bringing out the con-

trasts sharply. The last part should be read with force and fervor.

10

From "As You Like It." A certain duke and his followers have been banished from court and are living in a forest. One of the company sings this song in praise of the life they are now leading. There is an implied contrast between the care-free existence in the country and the striving, ambitious life at court.

Read gayly and buoyantly, expressing the joyousness of the singer.

11

From the same play. Two light-hearted pages sing this to a clown and his sweetheart, who are about to be married. The lyric touches upon the brevity of life, but the spirit is joyous.

Read with an appreciation of the circumstances under which the song was first sung. Make it joyful, blithe, and airy. As the clown says after the pages have finished: "Though there was no great matter in the ditty, yet the note was very *untunable*."

12

An extremely artificial poem. It gives one the impression that the poet is trying to be clever rather than sincere, that he is more interested in his rather affected manner of expression than in the matter to be expressed. It is "brain-poetry," as some one has said; not "heart-poetry."

On account of the paradoxes and subtleties of expression in the poem, the student will have to study the language closely. The general thought is suggested by the title. *Such quality* refers to "truest mettle" in the

preceding stanza. *affection's ground*: an abiding place for love. *close*: secret.

The metre is as intricate as the meaning. The variation in verse length, the frequent double rhymes, the complicated rhyme-scheme—all, together with the fanciful nature of the subject matter, suggest that the reading should be characterized by lightness, almost flippancy. But care is required to bring out the subtleties of thought.

13

A beautiful sonnet but somewhat difficult to understand. The student must bear in mind that the poet is throughout addressing the actual highroad by which he is traveling to Stella, his mistress. He professes gratitude to the road because it is his chief Parnassus (look up allusion); because his Muse, his source of poetic inspiration, sings more often to the accompaniment of his horse's feet on the road than to the sound of a "chamber melody"; and because the road is bearing him to Stella. As a token of his gratitude, he wishes that the road may be maintained and honored, that it may not be encroached upon, that no deed of violence may be done upon it, and that, as the highest possible bliss, it may be honored by Stella's walking upon it for "hundreds of years."

Notice the beautiful soft combinations of consonants and vowels and the alliteration and repetitions. Observe that many of the rhyme-words have the long-"e" sound—certainly a very musical vowel.

Though the expression is somewhat exaggerated, the poem rings true. It should be read in such a way as to bring out all the grace and sincerity, the mingled fancifulness and earnestness that must have been in the poet's heart.

14

Addressed to his absent friend. The language may seem hyperbolic and insincere as spoken by one man to another. This is explained in part by the fact—for it seems established as a fact—that the person addressed in these sonnets was a young nobleman, and in part by the fact that this affected style was fashionable in those times and was usual in sonnets. A contemporary writer speaks of Shakespeare's "sugared sonnets." Perhaps a few of them are too sweet for modern taste; but the student must ignore this fine speaking and enjoy the wonderful workmanship and rare beauty of thought and sound.

true: constant. *In your will* modifies "do", in the next line.

Study and read this according to the suggestions given under No. 5.

15

The same theme as in the preceding sonnet; but as it is Shakespeare that has been absent this time, the imagery is different. His absence has been during the summer and autumn, yet it has seemed more like bare winter, since he has been absent from his friend.

hope of orphans: the fruit of autumn rouses the kind of feeling in the poet that arises in a mother as she looks forward to the birth of her fatherless son. *near:* nearness.

Remember that you have failed to read a sonnet like this well if you do not read musically. To do this you must appreciate to the full the beauty of the rich images and the delightful tones and movements of the language. For example, murmur over and over the first line of the second quatrain, letting the "m's" linger on the

lips until the sounds have become as pleasant as a soft strain of music.

16

To his friend. One of the most beautiful of Shakespeare's sonnets. It is sincere and reflects a genuine and a universal feeling. Shakespeare, endowed with matchless gifts of emotion, thought, wisdom, and expression, here pictures himself in deep despondency, envying the prospects, the features, the popularity of some of his friends, even coveting the artistic power and wide-embracing intellect of certain others. Then his mind falls upon his dearest friend, and the thought of his friendship lifts him from gloom to happiness. No better expression of this theme can be found in literature. The sonnet just preceding this one in the series represents the poet at night, so perhaps we may conclude that this was conceived at night. This lends peculiar significance to the picture of the lark rising at break of day.

Him, line 6, is a demonstrative, equivalent to "that person."

Notice the dull, muffled sounds in the first two quatrains—the thin, obscure vowels ("u", among others) and the heavy consonants; and observe how the words drag along—for example, in the third line of the first quatrain. All this suggests the gloom of the poet's mood. But observe that in the third quatrain and the couplet the melody has become bright and happy—long and broad vowels, rapid-running words, a feminine rhyme (rather rare in Shakespeare's sonnets)—in fact, all the vivacity and joyousness of a morning song.

It is easy to perceive how the sonnet should be read, but to read it in such a way as to bring out all its beauty is difficult. It will require and reward much study and intelligent practice. The student must be sure, at least,

to read the first eight lines and the last six lines in different keys.

17

To his friend, on the same theme as No. 15. His friend has evidently accused him of having changed.

qualify: modify. *just to the time*, etc.: punctual to the appointed time and not changed by absence. The couplet explains the word "nothing" in the preceding line. "Bringing water for his stain" apparently means that his returning on time and his being unchanged washes away the "stain" of absence. To call his friend a rose seems to us affected, but neither Shakespeare nor his friend apparently thought of the language as affected.

Read with earnestness and sincerity.

18

Compare this sonnet with Nos. 5 and 6, which are on the same theme: the effect of time on beauty.

steal from his figure: move stealthily away from its figure on the face of the clock." Shakespeare rarely uses "its", as the form was not then in common usage. *age unbred*: age unborn, future age.

The music and imagery of this sonnet are in Shakespeare's best manner. In reading be sure to emphasize the word "three", which is repeated deliberately to express more forcibly the length of time that has passed. Notice that in the third quatrain a new thought is introduced. The poet has been saying that his friend has not changed in three years, but now he fears that he may be deceived. Lest he may be, he records for future readers his conviction that his friend is more beautiful than any one else can ever be. Read the first two quatrains confidently, read the next as if somewhat in doubt, read the couplet boldly.

19

Perhaps you will not care for the extravagance shown in this famous lyric. But it is a beautiful poem—graceful, musical, full of delicate fancies. The description of Rosaline is as pure as a Greek statue. The lines beginning “Heigh ho” are full of beauty and emotion. They give the impression that the poet is so affected by the beauty of his mistress that he must interrupt his description to utter this fervent ejaculation. The last line of the poem is surcharged with feeling. It falls upon the ear like a long-drawn sigh.

The clear: clearness. Look up the word in a good dictionary. *Since for a fair*, etc.: if you speak of fairness, there is none fairer; if you speak of virtue, none is so divinely virtuous.

The chief characteristic of this poem, when read aloud, is the soft melody. The sounds are unusually musical: the vowels open and broad, the consonants smooth, and the combinations very pretty—in fact, there is not a discordant phrase in the poem. Read in such a way as to bring out this characteristic. Read in strict tempo, but lightly and smoothly. The voice should probably be a little raised. Read the verses beginning “Heigh ho” much more slowly, and as if with a sigh. Pronounce “heigh”, “high”, in order to make the first vowel of the line the same as the last.

21

A fanciful little lyric. Observe that all the rhymes are feminine, that the rhyme-scheme is rather complicated, that the verses are of irregular length.

“Love” is, of course, Cupid. The poet believes that Cupid will not have won a true conqueror’s glory until

he has subdued the poet's mistress. Line 6 means "Deliver me from grief and thyself from fear"—fear because the poet feigns that his mistress may conquer Cupid.

Read rapidly and lightly.

22

The thought of this lyric is hard to grasp. It is a serenade, sung by the poet to his sleeping mistress. He weeps, perhaps because he has offended her; but he hopes for a reconciliation on the morrow.

Fountains, line 1: his eyes. *what*: why. *Sun* is the subject of "doth waste" and "mountains" is the object. *My sun*, line 5: his mistress. The antecedent of "your," line 6, is "fountains"; of "that", line 7, is "sun" in line 5. In the second stanza, line 2, "rest" is the subject of "begets" and "peace" is its object.

With a thorough understanding of the meaning, turn now to the reading. You will need to exercise care in emphasizing certain words, in order to express the thought. For example: "sun", line 5, is contrasted with "sun", line 4; "heavenly" is set off against "heaven". Practice the reading until you can express the thought, then turn your attention to the musical qualities. This is a serenade, but it has almost the music of a lullaby. Notice how prominent are the soft consonants: "s", "l", "ng". Read the whole poem with the word "sleeping" in mind, and with the thought that this is a "song for music."

23

To his friend. The poet begins by asking if he should compare his friend to a summer day. He answers this

in the first two quatrains. The third quatrain records the conviction of the poet that his friend's beauty shall not fade, but that it shall live in these sonnets.

Untrimmed is a participle modifying the first "fair" in the preceding line; it is probably a nautical term, meaning stripped of sails. *that fair thou owest*, the fairness, the beauty, thou ownest. *This*, in the last line, refers to the sonnets in which Shakespeare is immortalizing his friend.

Read the first line as a question, the second line as a negative answer, and the rest of the first two quatrains as an explanation or elaboration of this answer. Emphasize "thy" and "eternal" at the beginning of the third quatrain, to contrast with the last line of the first quatrain. Read the couplet confidently.

24

When, in old stories and poems, the poet reads descriptions of lovely knights and dead ladies, he thinks that the old writers must have been trying to describe beauty like that of his friend. But since they looked but with prophetic eyes, they could not sing his real worth. As for himself and contemporary poets, they look upon his friend with *wondering* eyes, but have not the skill of the old masters to sing his praise.

Go through the poem line by line, noting the assonance and alliteration and the striking phrases. Follow the suggestions previously given for reading Shakespeare's sonnets. Be sure to emphasize "we" in the last line, to contrast with "they" in the preceding line.

25

Basia: kisses. This is one of the capricious lyrics so popular in Elizabethan times. It aims to be clear in

phrasing, artistically irregular in line length and in rhyme-scheme, and musical in expression. The feminine rhymes and the short, "run-on" lines produce a gay, dancing movement, in close keeping with the half-playful mood of the poet.

Notice how ingeniously the figure of harvesting is carried throughout the second stanza.

26

Direct and straightforward, but not altogether serious. The poem has a definite outline. The first two lines form the introduction, the last two lines the conclusion. The first stanza discusses jealousy, the second apparent inconstancy, the third attention to business affairs.

Read in a rather formal, matter-of-fact manner, but with just a suspicion of humor in a line or two—for example, in the line "And not ever sit and talk."

27

A sort of allegory. "Love" is an amorous young man; the blossom, a beautiful young lady. Dumaine, who sings this song in "Love's Labours Lost," has sworn not to love for three years; but the beauty of Katherine compels him to forswear himself.

A dainty little poem, but perhaps over-sentimental. The short lines and trochaic movement suggest sprightliness, but this must be somewhat restrained by the sentimentality of the language.

28

Rather labored and somewhat artificial, though still earnest and sincere. It is addressed to the poet's obdurate mistress.

Great assays, in the third stanza, refers to the poet's

great deeds to win his mistress' love. The next line refers to her attitude, and the next to his patience. *Mind*, in the fourth stanza, seems to mean "devotion." In the fifth stanza, *thine own approved* means the poet himself, since he has proved himself to be hers.

Be sure that you comprehend the meaning of all the phrases, then read in an earnest, serious, rather stately manner, stressing the last verse of each stanza. You will perhaps have some difficulty in getting variety into the reading; probably the poet intended it to be all in the one key.

29

This sonnet is somewhat in the manner of Shakespeare, but it lacks his consummate beauty of phrase and melody. It should be read with dignity and thoughtfulness.

prejudge thy bliss: spoil thy bliss by false, premature judgment. *world of loving wonders*: a great number of miracles of love, referring to the half paradoxical statements that follow.

30

Another poem that reveals thought more than feeling. It is, however, both ingenious and musical.

The first two stanzas praise the beauty of the lady weeping; the last stanza urges the lady to cease grieving, since her beauty in joy is greater than her beauty in tears.

keep, line 3 of St. 1: abide. *parts*: qualities. *passion*, St. 2: suffering. *leave off in time to grieve*: cease grieving soon, or before it is too late.

When you read, be sure you show that the third stanza expresses a different thought from that in the other two. It is addressed directly to the lady, and should be read with a touch of pleading. Emphasize the word "joyful."

Make the most of such musical lines as "She made her sighs to sing."

31

A noble expression of truth, made beautiful and striking with Shakespeare's highest art. Each quatrain completes one phase of the thought and the couplet concludes and emphasizes.

Shakespeare probably uses the word *impediment* because the marriage ceremony contains the phrase "cause or just impediment" why the contracting parties should not marry. *bends with the remover to remove*: suffers motion, or change, when some change takes place in the loved person. *Ever-fixed mark* is apparently some great cliff along the sea, which serves as a landmark for vessels. The antecedent of *whose*, in line 8, is "star." The line seems to mean: "whose astrological influence is not known, although his (that is, "its") astronomical height has been calculated." The antecedent of *his*, in line 11, is "Time."

Shakespeare's fondness for contrasts and antitheses makes his sonnets difficult reading, but gives force when the reading is good. Practice reading lines 3 and 4 until you can satisfy yourself that you have expressed the meaning intelligently. Read with intense earnestness.

32

This lyric is just what the title implies: a brief, simple, melodious song. One might call it a poet's valentine. Though fanciful, it is nevertheless sincere and graceful.

Read in a joyful, direct manner, bringing out the contrasts and stressing the "key-line", "My true-love hath my heart and I have his." The poem, when well read, has a pretty melody.

33

Again, as often, the title gives us the clue to the interpretation. The poem is a simple, almost naïve expression of a universal sentiment. It is graceful and delicate in thought and form. Read simply and naturally, expressing all the quaint music that is in the irregular movement and pretty sounds.

wonder: probably, admiration.

34

A perfect sonnet in plan. Each part is so distinct that it can be detached from the poem, yet each develops the main theme. It is impossible not to feel that the poet was writing from his heart—the language is candid and genuine and expresses firm devotion. The only word one could wish changed is “swain”, line 3, and that is out of place now only because the fashion in words has changed. *base*, line 1: low. It is the antonym of “high”, with no suggestion of moral baseness.

Read the poem silently until you have been impressed with the spirit of true devotion, then read it aloud. Read with firm, full tones, making your voice as musical as possible. The couplet sums up the thought: see that you make that clear in your reading.

35

Carpe Diem, “Seize the Day.” It is a clown’s song in “Twelfth Night,” sung to two jolly tipplers who demand a love-song. This is one of the songs in gayer mood that Shakespeare wrote to entertain the audiences that flocked to hear his plays. Read it lightly and brightly.

Sweet-and-twenty: a vocative, meaning sweet maid of twenty years.

36

The song of a peddler. In Shakespeare's "The Winter's Tale" one of the characters is Autolycus, a thieving rogue, who at one time plays the part of a peddler and swindles the country folk. The title of this poem, then, is intended to convey the meaning that this peddler is an *honest* one, in contrast to Autolycus. His language is rather ambiguous: the reader hardly knows whether he is using the language of a peddler to make love or using the language of love to sell his wares.

good pennyworths: good bargains; but, as the peddler says, money cannot buy them: he keeps his wares but for the ladies to view. Possibly the inference is that he gives them away. *look for gifts again*: expect gifts in return. *orient'st*: purest.

In reading be sure to bring out the contrasts: "wares" and "heart;" "trash" and "true" in line 5 of St. 1; "great gifts" in line 1 of St. 2, and "trifles" in line 2; etc. Notice the frequent alliteration.

The line, "It is a precious jewel to be plain" would be a good motto to adopt in your reading of this poem. Read it simply, with just a hint in the first line or two that you are calling out wares.

37

This poem is a series of winter pictures, of vivid, realistic pictures. It is from "Love's Labours Lost," where it is opposed to a poem containing a series of summer pictures.

doth keel the pot: cools the pot, perhaps cools a pot of cooking pottage by stirring it. *saw*: sayings, sermon. *crabs*: crab apples.

Let your mind fill in the details of the pictures. Be able to see Dick blowing on his hands to keep them

warm, while he is driving his sheep home. Have you ever been in a country church in winter when everyone has a cold and "coughing drowns the parson's saw"?

After you have visualized the pictures, read the poem naturally, pausing a little after each detail and endeavoring to express the ideas vividly but simply. Do not try to imitate the owl's cry, try merely to suggest it.

38

An apt title for this would be: "The sear and yellow leaf." (See *Macbeth*, V, 3, 23.) The three quatrains present three beautiful, clear pictures, painted with unusually picturesque phrases. The couplet summarizes the thought and draws a sort of conclusion.

Choirs is here used as the place where the bird-chorus has been singing. *by and by*: immediately. *his*, line 10: its. *leave*: take leave of.

This is one of the poems that should be repeated over and over. It is one of the most graphic and melodious of Shakespeare's sonnets. Get the pictures clearly before your eye and let the music reach your ear, then read earnestly and clearly.

39

This sonnet contains a number of legal and commercial phrases, which are here transmuted into the gold of poetry. It is noted for its beautiful phrases: "sessions of sweet, silent thought," "death's dateless night," "love's long-since-cancelled woe." It has a good deal of alliteration and several contrasts. The first three quatrains have a heavy, sombre music, which changes to a glad melody in the couplet.

Your reading should bring out the emphatic words and contrasts, and express the deep, heart-felt emotion

of the poet. Shakespeare doubtless had in mind some "precious friends hid in death's dateless night." As we read his poem, we should let our memories run back to our dead friends and pay a tribute to them "as if not paid before." Whenever we can translate poetry into terms of our own experience, we shall be able to experience the emotion and should be able to read with more expression and sincerity.

40

The Elizabethans had a good deal to say in praise of sleep—perhaps, as some one has suggested, their strenuous, nervous life made them poor sleepers.

The first quatrain contains a number of metaphors for sleep. *knot of peace*—Shakespeare in "Macbeth," II, 2, 37, speaks of sleep that "knits up the raveled sleeve of care." "Sleeve" means a coarse, soft silk; and the passage seems to suggest that sleep and rest knits up the sleeve of care which has been unraveled during the day. Probably Sidney means about the same thing in this passage. C. f. "bond of peace," Eph. 3:4. *baiting-place of wit*: the place of refreshment for the mind. *indifferent*: impartial. In the next quatrain the poet calls upon sleep to shield him from despair—that is, come to him, so that he may sleep and forget. The poet promises to pay good tribute to Sleep if he will do this. *shield of proof*: shield that has been proved, strong shield. *prease*: press, crowd. *civil wars*, because the poet is suffering "internal conflicts." The first three lines of the next quatrain enumerate the gifts that are to be given Sleep as tribute—all of them being gifts that are appropriate to sleep. *rosy garland*: garland of roses, the rose being the flower of silence. C. f. Latin *sub rosa*. The last three lines of the poem make up the final thought. The poet

says that if the gifts just mentioned will not persuade Sleep to come—since in reality they all belong to Sleep by right, he will as a favor permit him to see in the poet's dreams a better picture of Stella than he can find elsewhere. *heavy grace*—it is almost as if Sleep were addressed as “Your Grace,” the adjective “heavy” being prefixed as descriptive. Perhaps it means “your slow, reluctant favor.”

The chief literary qualities in this poem are the ingenuity of the figurative language, the picturesqueness of the phrases, and the melody. Keep in mind, as you read, that the poet is addressing Sleep as a real person, giving him the attributes and qualities that would belong to him. After you see the meaning of the phrases and the different parts of the outline, read naturally—“naturally,” in this instance, meaning “earnestly.” In your reading set apart by pauses the different metaphors in the first quatrain and the gifts in the third quatrain. Read the last three lines rather more rapidly, letting the voice rise gradually to the last three words, then fall abruptly.

41

Three quatrains in which the changes of time are described in three figures, then a couplet in which the poet states an opposing thought: that his verses in praise of his friend shall resist time.

The second quatrain is difficult. It compares man to a star which, starting in the full radiance of heaven, reaches a brief climax, then is eclipsed by opposing stars. *confound: ruin. delves the parallels in beauty's brow: makes furrows in the forehead.* (One may see in this paraphrase how inferior any language is to the poet's.) *nature's truth: the genuine creations of nature. times in hope: time to come.*

After you have mastered these difficulties, you will see that the poem is both beautiful and true. Read naturally, paying due attention to the pauses and to the rise and fall of the movements. Show by your reading that the couplet is opposed to the preceding part of the poem; to do this emphasize "and yet" and "my verse." The poet has stated that "*nothing* stands;" now he says "*my verse* shall stand." Bring out contrasts of this sort: it is one of the principles of intelligent reading.

42

Another sonnet in which Shakespeare expresses his thought by means of a figure drawn from legal procedure. It may be paraphrased thus: "You gave me a charter of affection; but since the property conveyed has proved to be too valuable and since it was granted by you on an error ("upon misprision growing"), it reverts to you."

The figure is ingeniously carried out down to the couplet: that is out of keeping. The sonnet lacks the sincerity of Shakespeare's best work, and the feminine rhymes detract from the dignity that one usually finds in his sonnets.

In your reading concentrate upon making the thought clear and the expression musical. The feminine rhymes are certainly very pretty in sound.

43

The thought of the first two quatrains is clear: Those that repress their passions are blessed of heaven. The first two lines of the third quatrain seem to mean that even though such persons are selfish in not giving themselves more freely, yet their good qualities do nevertheless bless the world. The flower is here taken as the

emblem of those that move others but are themselves not moved. The last four lines add the thought that if such persons become base, they are doubly hateful.

This sonnet lacks the close unity, the happy phrasing, and the beauty of sound which are associated with Shakespeare's best work.

show: appear.

Follow directions already given for reading Shakespeare's sonnets.

44

This lyric, though perhaps it may not appeal as strongly as some of the others, has nevertheless an affecting simplicity and earnestness. The use of the refrain is very skilful. Notice how many monosyllables are used and how simple is the phrasing. Notice, too, the short lines, suggesting simplicity and directness. Read with sincerity and with vigor.

45

The nightingale's plaintive notes have been the theme of much poetry. If you do not know the myth of Philomela, the nightingale, consult an encyclopedia. Pandion was Philomela's father. The poet is the more affected by her song because he also is sad.

Only the first part of the original has been reprinted by Palgrave.

It is a pretty poem, but it does not betray deep feeling. Read rhythmically and somewhat rapidly.

46

A heavy, mournful "night-piece". It has a certain sullen note that exactly fits the solemnity of thought. Notice the frequent alliteration: of "s" in the first line,

“b” and “d” in the second, “l” and “re” in the third, etc.

Restore the light: i. e., by bringing the peaceful forgetfulness of sleep. The fourth line of the first quatrain is obscure. “Return” is an imperative, as “relieve” and “restore” in the preceding line. The sentence would then mean: “Return and bring with you forgetfulness of my care. *passions*: sufferings. *approve*: prove. The antecedent of *you*, in the same line, is “dreams.”

How accurate is the phrase “the images of day-desires,” to describe dreams!

Study the poem until you feel the gloom and weariness of the poet, then read slowly and in a solemn tone.

47

Same theme as No. 45. In that poem the nightingale is the theme, in this the poet is the theme, the nightingale being used only as introduction and analogy. In No. 45 the emotion is faint; in this it is keen. In No. 45 the expression is simple; in this it is more elaborate and more musical.

The first stanza mentions only the nightingale. *springeth*: comes forth into spring. *a thorn her song-book making*: making a thorn (i. e., a grief, a wound) the theme of her song. The refrain-stanza is addressed directly to the bird; it institutes the contrast between the nightingale, Philomela, and the poet. *Here*, line 2: in my bosom. *thy thorn without*, etc.: thy grief is external and superficial, mine is internal and deep. In the second stanza the first four lines are descriptive of the nightingale, the last four of the poet. *cannot have to content me*: cannot have the means to content myself.

The rhyme-sounds are extremely beautiful. Notice that the rhymes are all feminine and that the last

syllable is very soft and musical—"eth" and "ing" predominating. You will discover, however, that some of the words are difficult to pronounce.

In reading strive especially to bring out clearly the contrast between Philomela and the poet and to give adequate expression to the music of the lyric—which is a delightful melody in a minor key. The poem is worth reading aloud many times.

48

From "Measure for Measure." It is sung to Mariana, who has been deserted by her lover. As she says, it is sung to "please her woe." The song represents the lady as appealing to her lover. His eyes are called the "break of day" because they are bright; but it is a false dawn, since it is not followed by the day—that is, by happiness, love.

Notice the alliteration and the repetition. Read softly and musically, trying to express the pathos of the theme. The repetitions have here a sad, solemn note; as Shakespeare himself says of a strain of music, they have a "dying fall."

49

The first two quatrains state one thought, the third quatrain and the couplet an opposing thought. The figure in the last six verses, of Love dying and Faith and Innocence performing the last sad rites is pretty and touching.

cleanly: completely. *latest*: last. *recover*: restore.

It is a strong, sincere expression of emotion. Notice how many short, simple words are used in the first eight lines, and how direct and literal is the language. Read that part of the sonnet in a simple, firm, emphatic, somewhat conversational manner. Notice that the words in

the last six lines are longer and that the language is figurative. Read these verses more slowly, more musically, and with more tenderness. This sonnet has been called a "wonderful sob of supplication." This applies, of course, more closely to the last six lines, but the contrast between the first part of the poem and the last makes the supplicating note more appealing. Be sure to stress "thou" in the last line, to make the contrast with "all" in the preceding line.

50

The title means "Man walketh in a vain show:" Psalms 39, 6. The poem is a sort of allegory. The sun is a beautiful noble lady, the shadow is a lowly and despised suitor; it is to him that the poet speaks. The figure is, for the most part, ingeniously sustained.

proved: approved.

The lyric has the charm that always accompanies beauty half concealed; it is more attractive because of the fact that the literal meaning eludes the reader, while the figure itself is beautiful and suggestive. The alliteration, the assonance, and the repetitions given additional charm. The long lines enclosing the shorter ones, the long lines ending in feminine rhymes and the short ones in masculine rhymes—this form is unusual and effective. The first two stanzas are particularly fine.

The poem is difficult to read. The allegorical significance should be kept in mind, to give point to the literal language. Perhaps the reading is more effective if the first line of each stanza is read in a distinct, somewhat commanding voice, then the next line in a lower tone, which gradually rises to the middle of the last line, then abruptly falls. This plan fits almost every stanza and it seems to be the natural way in which to read. But

do not allow yourself to be forced into any plan that does not seem fitting.

51

Addressed to the mysterious "dark lady", who, if we may trust the evident meaning of the sonnets, exercised an unholy fascination upon the poet. The lady is either not beautiful or she is not good; but the poet's love has blinded him so that he does not perceive her true appearance or nature.

correspondence with: similarity to. *censure*: judge. *denote*: show. *watching*: waking.

Read the first two quatrains in such a manner as to express the poet's doubt whether *his* eyes, or "all men's" judge correctly. Read the last word of the second quatrain and all the third emphatically, since the poet has now decided that his own eyes are deceived. There is more emotion and more certainty in this quatrain. Voice the "No", the last word of the second quatrain, strongly. Its position shows it is emphatic. The couplet is an accusation against either Love or his mistress; in either case read it with a touch of bitterness.

52

The thought is easy to grasp and the emotion easy to express. Read it softly, as if fearful of awakening the sleeper; read it slowly and reflectively. Make a distinct pause after the first stanza. The lyric has a smooth, subdued music that precisely suits the sentiment.

53

There is a certain admirable simplicity and directness in this poem. This quality, the careless but accurate tripping of the feet, and the half-lamenting, half-

contemptuous language make the lyric very unusual. The refrain, with its rhymes and repetitions and its graceful amphibrachs, is exceedingly beautiful.

late forgot: forgotten of late. The poet doubtless means this for an uncomplimentary reference to himself. *passing*: surpassingly.

In reading express all the sincerity and emotion of the deserted shepherd. Some lines are scornful. Read the refrain almost as if you were singing it.

54

Age speaking to a young lover. The old man professes to have experienced love and now tries to dissuade his young friend from loving.

self-proof: your own experience. *love's martyr*, etc.: he who sacrifices himself to love, confesses grief, as soon as the love has cooled. Look up the reference to Cassandra.

Notice that the second and third stanzas are closely connected.

Read in a direct, somewhat dry manner, as of an old man giving advice. In the third line of the first stanza make an abrupt pause after "stars", to render the next thought more forcible. The first two lines of the second stanza are scornful; but in the next two the old man grows almost sentimental—perhaps as he thinks of some experience of his own.

55

The poet pretends to scorn his mistress and to confess that he does not want her love; but, as the last two lines show, he is trying by scorn to beguile her into affection. The poem is ingenious and spirited, and the surprise in the last two stanzas is of the nature of true wit.

mere delight: nothing but delight. *more divine*: more divine than it is. *woman right*: a true woman.

Read with spirit, scorn, and firmness until you come to the last two lines. Now make a complete pause, then in a lower tone and with a smile, read the remainder.

56

Another song from "As You Like It." See note to No. 10. The winter wind and the bitter weather that the exiles in the forest have to endure are preferable to ingratitude. The sentiment is cynical, but the jollity of the refrain shows that the cynicism is only skin-deep.

Read the first six lines of each stanza in a direct, energetic manner. Read the refrain more rapidly, more joyfully.

57

A betrayed and deserted mother singing to her child. The simplicity and artlessness is wonderfully fine.

St. 1, *silly*: simple. *doubt*: fear. *chief*: chiefly. St. 3, *what can I more*: what more can I do to sooth you. Lines 3 and 4 are obscure. Perhaps they mean: "If any one scorn your misfortune, it may propitiate the fates to know that it was I that sinned." St. 7, *rascal*: This word formerly meant an animal whose flesh was so poor that he was not worth hunting. The next line shows that "rascal" has here something of the old meaning. St. 8, *God bless my babe*, etc.: God save my babe from inheriting his father's disposition.

The general tone is simple melancholy, yet there are flashes of pride and of other emotions, and throughout there is a sincere love and tenderness for the baby. In reading keep in mind the spirit of the whole composition, and read each stanza with its appropriate emotion.

58

Somewhat fanciful but exceedingly beautiful. The lover fancies that he sees in the slow movement of the moon, its wan face, and "languished grace", a resemblance to himself, so concludes that the moon must be in love.

of fellowship: because of fellowship—because we are in the same situation. *there*, ll. 11 and 14: in heavenly places. *That*, l. 13, is used merely to strengthen "whom." *Do they call*, etc.: in heavenly places do they call ungratefulness a virtue?

Observe the slow, heavy movement and the rich sounds of the first line. Picture the disappointed lover gazing up at the moon and comparing his state with its state—somewhat fancifully, as befits a lover, but with true emotion. There is a trace of bitterness in some of the lines. Graceful, reflective melancholy marks this poem, as simple, unadorned melancholy marks the previous one. Read with all this in mind.

59

O Crudelis Amor, "O Cruel Love." This lyric, like No. 52 by the same author, is almost like a sonnet in restraint and unity of thought and expression. It has, too, an admirable dignity and solemnity. The picture in the "shades of underground" is of the Greek Hades. Notice the assonance of "thou" and "ground", in the first line; of "arrived" and "admired", in the second; of "white", "Iope", and "blithe", in the fourth; of "smooth", "music", "move", in the sixth. Notice also the skilful alliteration.

Read slowly and distinctly, with dignity and repression, with a sombre note in the voice. Express the somewhat bitter emotion in the last line.

60

On the same theme as No. 57, except that in this the father seems to have been compelled to leave the mother and babe rather than to have deserted them.

wanton wag: lively, playful child, a term of endearment. St. 2, *by course*: in turn, one after another.

The long lines at the beginning of each stanza seem to be spoken reflectively. The short lines are addressed to the child. In their strict tempo, brevity of line and phrase, simplicity, and literalness, they suggest the nursery rhyme—suggest, no more than suggest. Read the long lines slowly, the short lines rapidly but seriously. The last two lines of the poem should be read softly and tenderly, as if the mother has now sung her babe to sleep.

61

The poet, mourning for a dead friend, calls for death; but that “grim grinning king”, having taken the rose, his friend, disdains to crop him, a weed. The capricious rhyme-scheme and the uneven length of line, together with the brevity of the poem, suggest a spontaneous outburst of grief. Notice how prominent are the explosive consonants: “p”, “d”, “t”, “c” (“k”).

and with lamenting cries, etc.: often, with lamenting cries, I call Death to bring peace to my mind. *grim*: almost an adverb, “grimly”, modifying “grinning.”

In your reading give the impression of violent, uncontrolled grief. Enunciate vigorously the explosive sounds. Let the voice rise gradually in the last three lines up to the middle of the last line, then fall suddenly and sadly.

62

From “Twelfth Night”, where it is sung to the melancholy, sentimental duke. The duke says: “It is silly

and dallies with the innocence of love." It is pretty and graceful, though it has a touch of sentimentality—which Shakespeare certainly intended. When set to appropriate music, it is an effective song.

cypres: a kind of cloth, here to be used for a shroud.

The rhythm is capricious. Do not attempt to read in measured accent, but stress the important words regardless of musical beat. After you have read it thus a few times, you will see that the movement, though irregular, is quaint and beautiful.

63

The poet's mistress being dead, he commands his lute, whose music had formerly pleased her, to be as silent as it was before its wood was made into a lute. The thought is fanciful but the poem is graceful in sentiment and artistic in melody.

immolodious: either "unmelodious" or "noiseless." *to tune those spheres*: a reference to the old fancy that the heavenly spheres made harmonious music as they turned. *each stroke a sigh*: each stroke draws forth a sigh. *turtle*: turtle-dove.

It is natural that the sound of the instrument which has pleased his dead mistress should be displeasing to him and that he should resolve to play it no more. That thought is the basis of the poem. Notice how soft and melodious the sounds are: the long-"o" and the sound of "o" in "move", both within the lines and in the rhyme-words; and the softer consonants, such as: "m", "s", "r", "v", "w". Make your voice reproduce all the melody in this melodious lyric.

64

From "Cymbeline." Sung over the grave of Fidele by her foster-brothers. One of the most beautiful dirges

ever written. It is simple, as befits the theme and the singers, yet it expresses one of the fundamental truths and emotions of life.

golden: a very expressive epithet, meaning "bright", "rich", "fortunate", and much more. *Physic*: represents the medical profession, as "scepter" represents "ruler." *consign to thee*: come to thy condition.

Read with simplicity, dignity, and pathos. Do not "mouth" this lyric.

65

From "The Tempest", following No. 5. (See notes on No. 5.) Sung by the fairies to Ferdinand, whose father is supposed to have been drowned.

Read simply and solemnly. Let your reading of the last line suggest the tolling of a bell.

66

A funeral song from "The White Devil." It is sung as women are wrapping the dead body in the shroud.

gay tombs: in contrast to the "hillocks."

Read slowly and very simply. Put much energy into the last two lines.

67

The poet, in sombre mood, anticipates his death and writes his own epitaph. There is much natural pathos in this sonnet.

by fortune: by chance. The pathos of this phrase is intensified when we remember that Shakespeare did not print his sonnets at first, but gave them to his friends in manuscript. His friend might be expected, then, to read the sonnets often. The "by chance" shows in what a melancholy mood the poet is.

Read with simplicity, in a minor key.

68

On the same theme as the preceding, but expressing the opposite wish. It is superior to the other in emotional power, in phrasal power, and in musical power. Note the phrase, "surly, sullen bell"—how suggestive the sounds are of the tolling of a bell.

Read with deep sincerity, trying to express the love the poet felt—a love so great that he asks to be forgotten that his friend may be happier.

69

From "The Merchant of Venice." In the play the song has especial significance because it gives Bassanio a clue as to the right casket to choose. The chief thought is that Fancy (i. e., Young Love) is nourished by seeing, and therefore soon dies.

Read lightly and musically.

70

This song gives an excellent example of the fanciful conception that is called a "conceit." It is, however, very ingenious and musical. One can forgive the exaggerated language for the sake of the delicacy and grace of expression. Notice the alliteration, the assonance, the musical feminine rhymes. It will aid in getting the rhythm to observe that the first four lines have each five feet, while the last two have each six. The last line scans:

Wheth'-er the ros'-es be your lips' or' your lips' the
ros'-es

Read lightly and rhythmically.

71

Fanciful and somewhat too sentimental for modern taste. "Love" is, of course, the little winged Cupid.

whist: be silent. Notice that the third stanza is connected closely with the second—"Be silent, else I will whip you." Notice that the last line of the last stanza rhymes with the last line of the third.

The lyric has lively fancy and a gay, light music. Read it lightly and rapidly, as if half in jest and half in earnest. Enjoy the brightness and liveliness and let your reading reveal your enjoyment.

72

Another conceit. Sung by Apelles, in "Campaspe." He is in love with Campaspe.

His mother's doves: Venus' car was drawn by doves. *set*: wagered.

For reading, follow the suggestions concerning the preceding poem. Put animation into the last two lines.

73

A fresh, spirited, out-of-door song. Notice the pleasant internal rhyme in the alternate lines, the rapid flowing rhythm, the repetitions of lines, and the frequency of the "orow"-sound. Alliteration and assonance are also prominent.

stare: starling.

Read gayly and joyfully. This is a morning song. Catch the freshness and breeziness of the day and the poet's joyful expectation of his mistress, and let your voice express it.

74

Prothalamion: "A marriage song." Spenser wrote it in honor of two noble ladies, Somerset by name, here spoken of as two swans.

Observe how intricate the form of the stanza is. The normal rhyme-scheme is abbaa, edddd, eefff, gg. But Spenser varies this sometimes, carrying one rhyme-sound for several lines, as "ay" in the first stanza and "e" in the third; and in some stanzas he uses the same or a similar vowel sound in several rhyme-words, though the words themselves do not rhyme, as "o" and "ou" in the first part of the 7th stanza and "e" in the last part. Observe also that all the lines are iambic pentameter except the fifth, tenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth, which are iambic trimeter. Observe further the refrain. The last line is invariable, but the next to the last is slightly modified to fit in well with the preceding idea. All told, it is a complex metrical plan; and when we reflect that this is carried out so consistently and artistically through ten eighteen-line stanzas, we get some conception of Spenser's "accomplishment of verse."

The sounds are extremely melodious. Notice that the rhyme words contain broad, open vowels, rarely short, flat ones. Notice how prominent are the smooth, liquid consonants: "m", "l", "f", "v", "w", "r", "s" and "s" representing "z", as well as smooth combinations of consonant sounds. Notice the frequent alliteration, which sometimes extends over from one line to the next, as "f" in St. 2, lines 8 and 9. Notice the unusually pretty assonances, as in the first line of St. 1, the "a" in "calm", "day", and "air," and in the last line, the "e"-sound in "Thames" and "end." Soft, melodious sounds, then, and melodious combinations of sounds are striking characteristics of this poem.

The movement is, in general, graceful and majestic. The pauses are skilfully varied. The phrase does not usually coincide with the line, but runs on into the suc-

ceeding line, sometimes stopping within the line. The fifth and tenth lines often mark the end of a sentence or clause.

The language is intentionally archaic. St. 1, *delay*: allay, assuage. St. 2, *greenish*: sea-colored. St. 3, *seemed foul to them*: seemed foul compared to their whiteness. St. 4, *bred of summer's heat*: a punning allusion to the ladies' name, Somerset. *that her undersong*: her refrain. St. 9, *a noble peer*: the Earl of Essex, who had lately captured Cadiz, near which are the Pillars of Hercules. *Thine own name*, etc.: The Earl's name was Devereux, which, the poet thinks, comes from the words "ever" and "heureux," a French word meaning "happy" or "fortunate." *Elisa*: Queen Elizabeth. St. 10, *Twins of Jove*: Castor and Pollux. Look up all the unfamiliar words and the classical allusions.

To read Spenser well requires much intelligent practice. In fact, one recites Spenser, rather than reads him. Many of the sentences are so long that they cannot possibly be read in one breath. Students sometimes spoil their reading of Spenser by reading until they are out of breath, then halting perforce at the wrong place. Avoid that. Read in a voice more sonorous and perhaps a little higher than your natural voice. Read the last line of each stanza slowly and melodiously. Most of the short lines should be read very slowly, especially such lines as (St. 7) "Making his stream run slow." In nearly every stanza it is almost as if the movement swells along proudly and pompously until it reaches these short lines, then slows down for a moment, to begin again in the next verse. Emphasize the noble movement, but do not neglect the soft musical phrases. Linger over them and bring them out clearly and music-

ally. Remember that the primary characteristic of this poem is the melody of movement and sound.

75

A lively lyric on a pleasant theme. The intricate rhyme-scheme, the variation in rhythm and length of line, the repetitions and alliterations, the lively refrain, all call for spirited, yet careful reading. Emphasize the important words regardless of rhythm; you will find that the rhythm takes care of itself. Scan the next to the last line:

Hon'-est la'-bour bears a love'-ly face'.

76

Sic Transit, "Thus it Passes." A night song, serious and melancholy. The poet wishes for day, though he realizes that each new day consumes a part of his life. In the second stanza he regrets that night deprives him of time in which to live.

part of my life, St. 2, line 5, is addressed to day—See line 1 of St. 1.

Read gravely and heavily. Make music out of the refrain line.

77

An artistic little lyric. The comparison of life to a bubble is well carried out. Notice how the irregularity of the first few lines suggests the play of the children. Notice the contemptuous effect of the "b's" and "p's" in line 2 and 3, and the suggestive spondee in line 7: "fixed there." Notice the repetition of the "ou"-sound in the last two lines. The "t's" in the last line give the suggestion of scorn.

78

The poet addresses his soul. He accuses it of taking too much thought for the body and advises the soul to feed itself. In "Love's Labours Lost" is a line that expresses the thought of this sonnet: "The mind shall banquet, though the body pine." Notice the legal and commercial phrases. Observe the synonyms for the body: "sinful earth," "rebel powers," "outward walls," "fading mansion," "thy charge," "thy servant."

foiled by—these words have been substituted for the senseless words in the original, a typographical error. *array*: means both adorn, and beset, probably a sort of pun. *this excess*: the large cost which the soul spends upon the body. *let that pine*, etc.: let the body dwindle to increase the soul's possessions. *buy terms divine*, etc.: buy eternal periods of time for the soul by disposing of the worthless hours formerly devoted to the body.

The thought is difficult to grasp; but once that is done, the reading is easy. In your reading be sure to emphasize the contrasts that occur so frequently. Read the first two quatrains with a suggestion of contemptuous pity; read the third quatrain with a suggestion of entreaty and advice; read the couplet with fervor.

79

A simple theme demands simple treatment. This lyric lacks some of the poetical qualities of others we have studied, but it has dignity, simplicity, and earnestness. In form and in sentiment it is not unlike a hymn.

Observe that the first sentence includes the first three stanzas and that the last sentence includes the last two stanzas.

Read simply, clearly, naturally, and with conviction.

80

Another poem that carries a comparison throughout. The "Lessons of Nature" are lessons not only from inanimate nature, but from society and history. The "volume" is a manuscript book of medieval times, with colored vellum, gold edges and margins, colored ribbons attached as book-marks, and pictures on the margin—all of which means, in the figure, the obvious and beautiful aspects of nature.

of him, l. 3; modifies "art and wisdom," l. 4. *in every page*, l. 8; modifies "find out." *no period of the same*: no end to the same—that is, to God's power, providence, and justice.

Read with simplicity and seriousness.

81

A strong protest against the apparent injustice in the world. The vicious are most fortunate, the virtuous most miserable.

Notice the abruptness with which the poem starts. *those souls*, etc.: blind fortune proves most a friend to those souls that are most blinded by vice's evil, changeable mists.

The sonnet is strong and impressive. Notice that the first and third quatrains are made up of questions. Read forcibly and in a somewhat indignant tone. Make the couplet an urgent appeal.

82

A catalog of the world's injustices. In the first line the poet states that he is tired with "all these", the list of wrongs mentioned in the sonnet. In the couplet he repeats the thought of the first line and declares that

he would wish to die but that he must then leave his friend.

Pronounce the last word in line 8 "disable-ed." *doctor-like*: like a learned person. *simplicity*: affected artlessness.

Doubtless Shakespeare had in mind specific examples of "the world's way." The poem will make a stronger appeal to us if we fit the lines to persons that we know or know of. As you read, you will observe the monotony of the lines. This was intended; make it emphatic by reading the lines in the same level tone, with scorn and contempt throughout. Make a pause before the couplet; then read the first line emphatically and the last line in a lower, softer tone.

83

The city dweller's desire to live in the country. A simple little poem, artless but not inartistic.

unhaunted: uninhabited. Supply "who" after "he" in the first line.

Read in a meditative and quiet, yet earnest, tone. Express the wistfulness of the poet's utterance—wistfulness because the poet feels that his wish is not to be gratified. Put this expression especially into the reading of the last line.

84

A character sketch. It has vigor and picturesqueness. The poet follows closely the description given in Matthew and Mark.

parched body, etc.: his parched body and hollow eyes made him appear some uncouth thing exiled from civilization long before. *relent*: the echoes lived in rocky caves and are thought of as being themselves obdurate.

This is the only religious lyric in Book One. Read

the first two quatrains in a strong, earnest manner. The exhortation of John should be in a loud, ejaculatory voice. Read the last three lines more quietly, with something of melancholy in the tones. The last two words, being an echo, should be very faint.

BOOK II

85

Read the poem through first, to get the general impression and to study the main thoughts. You will observe that the first four stanzas, which are in a metre different from the rest of the poem, form the introduction. The first two stanzas of the hymn describe the season, the next three tell of the peace that existed on earth at the time of Christ's birth; etc. Follow the broad divisions of thought in this way.

The poem is, as the title suggests, a hymn expressing certain ideas and sentiments appropriate to the nativity of Christ. Milton was the great Puritan poet: his nature was essentially religious, and he was a diligent student of the Bible. He had been meditating on this subject for some time, and began to write the poem on a Christmas morning. All this is to be taken into account in interpreting the Hymn. In spite of the classical learning displayed, in spite of the exaggerations and conceits, it is a sincere emanation of the poet's nature. The religious mood, the meditation, the quiet and profound thought, and the occasional burst of ecstasy, are all characteristics of the poet. The language is lofty, dignified, musical, full of classical and biblical imagery and allusions. The words are somewhat bookish, and many of them are used in their literal, rather than in

the popular significance. If you will study the diction from the standpoint of etymology, you will discover that Milton never errs in his use of words.

But you must examine the words carefully before you can get the full meaning from Milton. Only the most baffling difficulties will be explained here; consult a good dictionary for the others. St. III, *heavenly muse*: There were but nine muses, but Milton here invokes a tenth one (as he does in the first lines of *Paradise Lost*), which is to inspire him to sing of heavenly things. St. IV, *prevent*: go before. *touch'd* probably modifies "voice"—See Isaiah 6, 6-7. St. 1, *gaudy*: holiday. St. 3, *turning sphere*: a reference to the old Ptolemaic astronomy, according to which the sun, the moon, and each of the planets was imbedded in a separate transparent sphere, which revolved around the earth. St. 4, *awful*: awe-struck. St. 5, *whist*: hushed, a participle. *birds of calm*: halcyons—Consult a classical dictionary. St. 7, *as*: as if. St. 8, *lawn*: grassy plain. *Simply*: innocently. *Pan*: the Greek god of all-nature; here it represents Christ. *kindly*: as a kinsman. *silly*: simple. St. 9, *took*: bewitched. *close*: end of a strain of music. St. 11, *unexpressive*: inexpressible. St. 12, *Sons of Morning*: See Job. 38, 7. St. 13, *consort*: harmonious accompaniment. St. 14, *speckled*: spotted, leprous. St. 17, *The old Dragon*: See Rev. 20, 2. St. 22, *twice-batter'd god*: See Sam. 5, 3. St. 24, *unshowered grass*: referring to the Nile country, which is watered by overflowing of the river.

The metre of the four introductory stanzas is iambic pentameter, except for the last line of the stanza, which is iambic hexameter—an alexandrine. The metre of the Hymn is iambic trimeter in the 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th lines; iambic pentameter in the 3rd and 6th lines, iambic tetrameter in the 7th, and iambic hexameter in the 8th.

The trimeters are paired off by position and by rhyme-words; the pentameters rhyme, enclosing a pair of trimeters; the tetrameter rhymes with the hexameter. The iambs are varied with trochees and spondees. Notice that the short lines lead up to the longer ones. Altogether, the form, although fixed and definite, allows free play of thought and emotion and fits admirably the shifting music of the poem. The stanza usually contains three clauses or ideas: the first one includes the first three lines; the second, the next three; the third, the last two—the clauses usually ending with long lines. This produces certain movements—"waves", they might be called, the third one being longer and more swelling. Observe the strength and majesty and melody of the last line.

As for the sounds, they vary as the emotion varies. In some stanzas the notes are soft and subdued, as St. 2; in others, melodious, as St. 5; in others, melancholy, minor, as St. 20; in others, animated, as St. 13; in others, discordant, as St. 17. Milton makes abundant use of alliteration and assonance. You should analyze a few stanzas in order to discover the sources of the musical effects.

After you have outlined the poem and have mastered the details and studied the harmony and movement, read the poem aloud. Determine the predominant idea and mood of each stanza before you read; then bring it out clearly. The sound echoes the sense so perfectly that you should be able, after some practice, to do this very well. Keep in mind that the shorter lines lead up to the long ones: the tones should increase in power. Imagine waves surging up on the sea-shore. Keep in mind also that this is a sincerely religious poem: endeavor to express the religious emotion that permeates

it. And if you find that you do not care for the poem after all this study, keep on reading and studying it, for it is one of the literary masterpieces of the world.

86

This ode was written to be sung to music. Since the occasion was the celebration of St. Cecilia, patron saint of music and supposed inventor of the organ, the power of music to arouse the different emotions is, appropriately, the theme.

St. 2, *Jubal*: See Gen. 4, 21. *chorded shell*: a shell, with chords or wires stretched across. *passion*: intense emotion of any kind. St. 3, *mortal alarms*: calls to deadly strife. St. 8, *this crumbling pageant*: the earth, the "universal frame."

The first stanza expresses the thought that the universe was shaped by the power of music; the second introduces the thought of the various passions excited by music, and this is developed in the next four stanzas. The trumpet and drum represent war; the flute and lute, "the woes of hapless lovers"; the violins, their jealousy, indignation; the organ, religious feeling. The seventh stanza continues the theme of the sixth and praises Cecilia. The Grand Chorus restates the idea of the first stanza and adds the thought that music shall unshape the universe, even as it shaped it. If the song were set to modern vocal and orchestral music, the different instruments would doubtless be made prominent in the stanzas descriptive of them, and perhaps they would all join in the chorus. Keep this idea in mind as you read.

Dryden shows wonderful power in suggesting the varying emotions by the sounds. Notice in the first four lines of the 3rd stanza, the harsh consonants and

broad, sonorous vowels; and observe how martially regular is the movement. Observe the shifting of the accent at the beginning of the fifth line and the use of concussive consonants and heavy vowels. In the last two lines the irregularity of accent suggests the excitement and confusion of the battle. The 4th stanza plainly suggests the music of the flute and lute. Notice the soft, liquid consonants: “f”, “l”, “m”, “s”-sonant; and the soft, pretty vowels, especially “u” and “o”. Violins are next suggested. The prominent vowel is “ā” and “a”; the prominent consonants are the explosive consonants: “p” and “d”. The 6th stanza represents the soft, sustained notes of the organ. All these suggestions are so vivid that they come close to imitation.

This poem lends itself readily to purely “elocutionary” effects. Avoid that. Make the reading give hints as to the different instruments and express the changing emotions; but exercise restraint. It is worth while to commit the four stanzas just discussed, as illustrations of what sounds can do in suggesting emotions.

87

Based on the massacre of the Vaudois, the Protestant subjects of the Catholic Duke of Savoy in Piedmont. The act aroused hot resentment among the Puritans in England. Milton, then Cromwell’s secretary, wrote the state papers protesting against the deed. Shortly afterward he wrote this sonnet. His sympathy and fierce earnestness are evident. It is a cry for vengeance and a prayer that God will make “the blood of the martyrs the seed of the church.”

stocks and stones: alluding to the use of images by Catholics. *triple Tyrant*: the Pope, with his tiara or triple crown. *Babylonian woe*: Milton, like other Puri-

tans, considered Papacy the Babylon mentioned in Revelations 17 and 18.

Wordsworth says, in his sonnet on the Sonnet, that in Milton's hands the sonnet "became a trumpet, whence he blew soul-animating strains." There is something of the trumpet note in this sonnet. Read it boldly, as a cry for vengeance. Read by sentences, not lines.

89

A pastoral elegy. "Lycidas" is the fanciful name given by Milton to his dead friend and schoolmate, Edward King, who was drowned in the Irish Channel. The poem is called a pastoral because Milton speaks of himself and his friend as shepherds and employs pastoral images to clothe his ideas. It may seem somewhat artificial, but the poetry resulting from the plan is so beautiful that we may easily forgive the artificiality.

The outline is plain: the first lines of each section reveal the theme of the section. Two of the sections, 6 and 8, are digressions in "higher mood."

Sec. 1 *Yet once more*: referring to the fact that Milton had written no poetry for about three years. Apparently he had not expected to write until he was more mature, but the occasion compelled him. *laurels, myrtles, and ivy*: representing King's poetry, beauty, and learning. *harsh and crude*: bitter and unripe, referring not to King, but by a transference of thought, to Milton himself and his immaturity. Sec. 2 *Sisters of the sacred well*: the muses. *some gentle muse*: some muse-inspired poet. Sec. 3 *For we were nursed*, etc.: referring to their companionship in the same college at Cambridge. *rural ditties*: referring to their writing of poetry. *Damoetas*: a pastoral name, here given to some

elderly friend, or teacher, of the two young men. Sec. 5 *the muse herself*: Calliope, muse of epic poetry, mother of Orpheus. Read the legend of Orpheus in a classical dictionary. *rout*: a disorderly crowd, referring to the Bacchanalian women, as does also "the hideous roar." Sec. 6 *to tend the shepherd's trade*: to cultivate poetry and the other fine arts. *Amaryllis and Neaera*: names of shepherdesses. Milton is here alluding to the gay and, in his eyes, trifling poets of his times. *clear*: noble, serene. "Clear spirit" is the object of "doth raise." *the blind Fury*: Atropos, one of the three fates, who cuts the thread of life. *Phoebus*: god of music, poetry, and the fine arts, here interrupts the poet's gloomy words. *foil*: an object used to set off another object by contrast. Perhaps the figure is that of a stone set in a ring, the latter acting as a foil. Sec. 7 *Arethuse and Mincius*: representing the pastoral poetry of Theocritus and Virgil. Milton here almost apologizes to the two earlier poets for departing from the rules of pastoral poetry and introducing a "higher mood", but he tells them that now he will continue the pastoral theme—the "oat" representing Milton's pastoral muse. *in Neptune's plea*: on behalf of Neptune, god of the ocean. *Hippotades*: Aeolus, ruler of the winds, son of Hippotes. Sec. 8 *Camus*: the river Cam, representing Cambridge University. The Cam is a sluggish stream. *sanguine*: bloody. The flower is the hyacinth: see the legend. *Pilot of the Galilean lake*: Peter, here standing for the church in general, not the Catholic church. King had intended to enter the clergy. The golden key represents Mercy; the iron, Justice. The passage is a stern indictment of the clergy of the established church, displaying Milton's Puritanism in all its grim vigor. *blind mouths*: By a

bold metonymy the poet describes in two words the false ministers and their prevailing characteristics: ignorance and greed. *are sped*: are provided for. *flashy*: insipid. *the grim wolf*: the Catholic church. Milton accuses the clergy of the Anglican church of allowing the priests to make inroads on their flocks. *two-handed engine*: perhaps the ax, representing the instrument of vengeance and destruction. See Matt. 3, 10. Some students see in this a reference to the headsman's ax and a prophecy that Laud, the Archbishop of the Church of England, would be beheaded. Probably Milton did not wish to be very clear. Sec. 9 *Alpheus*: another stream connected with Greek pastoral poetry. *Sicilian muse*: the muse that inspired Theocritus. After this second unpastoral outburst, Milton again resumes the pastoral strain. *use*: dwell. *of shades* modifies "valleys." *swart star*: the Dog-star. *sparely*: seldom. *let our frail thoughts*, etc.: Milton has just been speaking of strewing Lycidas' hearse with flowers; now it occurs to him that this is a "false surmise," since the body has been lost at sea. *monstrous world*: world of monsters, the ocean. *moist vows*: tearful prayers. *fable of Bellerus old*: Bellerium is a promontory in Lands-end, named apparently from Bellerus, a giant. Near this is a projection of rock called St. Michael's Mount. St. Michael was said to have been seen here, seated on a crag, hence called St. Michael's Chair. This part of England faces Spain: Namancos and Bayona. Milton thinks of St. Michael as still seated in this chair, "guarded mount," looking out across the sea; and the poet invokes him to turn his look toward England, and, melting with pity, discover Lycidas' body and send it home. Sec. 10 *Genius*: guardian spirit. Sec. 11 *uncouth swain*: unknown shepherd; Milton himself. *Doric lay*: Sicilian,

pastoral song. Look up all other allusions and unfamiliar words.

The metre chosen for "Lycidas" is iambic tetrameter, interspersed with iambic trimeter. Trochees are common and spondees frequent. The rhyme scheme is irregular: sometimes the rhymes are in couplets, sometimes in alternate lines; sometimes two rhyme sounds are found, sometimes more; a good many lines are not rhymed at all. The sections are of different lengths. This flexibility of metrical plan is partially responsible for the ease and spontaneity of the movement. The short lines are nearly always strong and retard the movement. The sentences run over from line to line.

Of the verbal beauties there is not time to speak. Almost every line will reveal graces of thought and phrase. Accuracy in diction, force, picturesqueness, sincerity, expressive figures of speech—these are some of the qualities of the language. Words are brought together in happy combinations, and the coincidence of sound and sense is perfect. The lines beginning "Fame is the spur" are worth memorizing. The pastoral idea is well sustained, and adds beauty and sweetness to the thought and expression.

In your reading try to express the varying emotions of the poet. The predominant emotion is, of course, grief; but there are various modifications of this. Some stanzas are pathetic, some indignant, some resigned, some hopeful. Do not try to force strict rhythm into your reading: merely follow the natural emphasis, and the rhythm will show itself flexible and graceful. Linger over the strong, expressive lines and such onomatopoeic sentences as: "But oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone," and "Grate on their serannel pipes of wretched straw." Bring out the noble thought and exquisite

music of stanza 10. Read the choice passages over and over—"Lycidas" is one of those poems that become more beautiful the longer you live with them.

90

Many of England's monarchs are buried in Westminster Abbey. As the poet gazes on their tombs, he meditates on the impotence of earthly power. The poem is suggestive of an epitaph, both in theme and in style. The employment of "here is," "here lie" to introduce sentences is in true epitaph manner, and the short lines rhyming in couplets carry out the same idea. The poem is remarkable for dignity, pathos, and for its forcible statement of a great truth. A touch of scorn for human greatness is discernible.

acre: a cemetery is sometimes called God's Acre. The word "acre" formerly meant "field", which explains the next line. *Once dead by fate*: as soon as fate has overtaken them.

Read with dignity, solemnity, and pathos. A hint of scorn should creep into the expression in such sentences as "Here's an acre," etc. The conception of the tombs as pulpits from which the dead preach is striking. In Taylor's "Holy Dying" the author uses some ideas from this poem: "There is an acre sown with royal seed, the copy of the greatest change, from rich to naked, from ceiled roofs to arched coffins, from living like gods to die like men."

92

Death is here well called "The Leveler", for that is the thought of the poem. Kingly power is the theme in the first stanza; martial glory, in the second; in the third the poet makes a personal application, using the second person instead of the third. The poem is noted

for directness and nobility. Some of the phrases are very expressive: "icy hand," "poor, crooked scythe," "pale captives," "creep to death," "victor-victim." The first two and the last two lines of the poem are true and forcible, and they serve well as introduction and conclusion. The figure of the actions of the just smelling sweet and blossoming is appropriate and striking. The line, "And must give up their murmuring breath" is onomatopoeic.

Read with simple earnestness. The pairs of short lines form sentences in themselves: read them slowly and with intensity. Bring out the contrasts, such as "They tame but one another still" with "They stoop to fate." The entire poem is worth committing to memory.

93

Milton wrote this when London, where he was then living, was threatened by an assault by the royal army. In the original title the sonnet is spoken of as "written on his, Milton's, door." Milton had been a pronounced opponent of the royalists. His sonnet is a dignified appeal for mercy. It is more simple and direct than much of the poet's work.

Colonel: a trisyllable. *Emathian conqueror*: Alexander the Great, who, when he destroyed Thebes, spared the house of Pindar the poet. *repeated air*: recited air or chorus. Athens is said to have been saved from destruction by the Spartan Confederacy because at the council of the conquerors a poet sang some verses from Euripides' drama "Electra." This so affected the hearers that they declared that the home city of so great a poet ought not to be destroyed. Both these allusions are appropriate.

This sonnet does not blow the trumpet, as the theme

and the circumstances do not fit that sound. Read quietly and earnestly.

94

Milton became blind when he was but forty-four. He still acted as Cromwell's secretary; but he felt that his one talent, power to write poetry, was being hidden "in a napkin", and, Puritan-like, he regrets that he cannot "serve his Maker." The sonnet is sincere, earnest, devout. The last line is a beautiful expression of truth.

is spent: is used up. *Doth God exact*, etc.: Does God expect me to do work that can be performed only in the daytime, when he denies me light? Notice that the first sentence takes up the first seven lines and a part of the eighth. The outline of the sentence is: "When I consider, etc., I fondly (foolishly) ask, 'Does God exact,' etc."

Read by ideas, not lines; for, as you will observe, the ideas usually end within the line. Remember that the poet is speaking from his heart. Read the poem earnestly, suggesting the despondency of the first seven lines, and the triumphant answer to that despondency in the last seven. Read the last line with conviction and exaltation.

97

The thought of this poem is fanciful, but graceful and pretty. The stanza structure is good. Short lines, rhyming with each other, begin and end the stanza, and enclose the three longer lines. The closing of the stanza is strong and effective. Herbert's title for the poem was "The Pulley", which better states the theme: though man have all the blessings that God pours out on him, yet they do not bring him peace. Peace is the pulley that draws man to God.

The word "rest" means peace, in the second stanza; in the third, it is a verb, meaning "remain satisfied;" in the fourth, it means "remainder of the blessings."

In your reading aim primarily at making the thought clear. Before you begin a sentence, look through it to see the relation of the parts, and in your reading reveal this relation. Bring out the contrasts sharply.

98

The general thought of this poem is, that the child faintly remembers the glories and beauty of his life in heaven before he was born on earth, that mortal life and age sully his purity, and that the poet would fain return or "retreat" to childhood. It is a very pretty idea. Wordsworth uses part of it in his "Intimations of Immortality."

a several sin, etc.: a separate sin to every one of the senses and emotions. *bright shoots*, etc.: strong suggestions of immortality, of a previous existence. *glorious train*: company of angels.

The simple form of the poem, the directness of expression, and the theme, all call for simplicity in reading. Earnestness and a sort of wistfulness should also characterize the reading. Be watchful to avoid the monotony that is likely to mar the oral rendering of this poem. Carry the thought over from line to line, not pausing at the end of a line unless the phrase clearly ends there.

99

Mr. Lawrence was the son of Henry Lawrence, a member of Cromwell's council. Of the son little is known. If we may judge from this sonnet, he and Milton were in the habit of passing an occasional social hour together. The sonnet is a poetical invitation to Mr. Lawrence to

set a time and place for such a meeting. The time of the poem is probably late winter.

gaining: modifies "we". "What may be won" is the object of "gaining." *the lily and the rose*, etc.: Milton introduces these flowers and the fact that they live without labor as fitting his invitation to relaxation and freedom from labor. *he who of these delights*, etc.: he that appreciates these social delights and yet does not resort to them too frequently, is wise.

The sonnet is somewhat conversational in tone. Read it brightly, voicing the lightness of the poet's mood and the musical grace of the language.

100

On a theme similar to the preceding. Cyriack Skinner, a former pupil of Milton, was interested in mathematics and politics. His grandfather was Sir Edward Coke, chief-justice of England and the author of many law books.

Swede and French: The Swede is Charles Augustus, who was at this time waging war with Poland, while the French were warring with Spain. *for other things*: other than mathematics and politics.

Read in the same spirit as the preceding. Milton is usually sombre; when we chance upon him in one of his gay hours, let us make the most of him.

103

Fanciful and ingenious. The underlying thought is sincere, but the form and language is studied. The first five stanzas, which form one sentence, introduce the poet's wishes for the imaginary mistress. The next eleven enumerate the wishes: beauty, St. 6-9; conversational power, St. 10; happiness, St. 11-14; such a life

that dares face death, St. 15. All the wishes mentioned are the object of the verb "wish", stanza 6. In stanza 16 the poet wishes that his mistress may have so much that she will have no wishes. In the remainder of the poem Crashaw asks Time to produce such a paragon as he has described, declaring that she will be his ideal (embody his random wishes and end them in kisses).

St. 2, *leaves of destiny*: book of fate. *that ripe birth*, etc.: that mature product of ordained Fate shall appear—referring to the maiden. St. 10, *Sidneian showers*: language as sweet and pretty as Sir Philip Sidney uses in his "Arcadia." St. 11, *give down to the wings of night*: make repose sound and peaceful, "down" being here a noun. St. 13, *forespent*: wasted. The wish in this stanza is that the maiden's days may be joyful without a preceding night of sorrow to serve as a foil. St. 19, *I unclothe and clear*, etc.: I clear away the vagueness of my wishes and declare that I mean such a one as the maiden mentioned in the two preceding stanzas. St. 21, *let her full glory*, etc.: may her real nature excel my desires. May my wishes, though addressed to an imaginary mistress, prove to be a true description of a real person.

Observe the peculiar metrical scheme: a dimeter, a trimeter, and a tetrameter, all rhyming. Observe the alliteration, sometimes double, as, "*studied Fate stand forth*" and "*rampant feather or rich fan*." Observe the occasional feminine rhyme.

The poem, though artificial, has grace, delicacy, and a cameo-like finish. It has music, too, of a quaint, staccato kind; but unless the reader is careful, he will fall into a monotony of expression, for the one musical note is repeated over and over. Read simply and directly, striving to make the thoughts clear and the feeling evident.

105

Full of clever, beautiful fancies. The mood is both tender and playful. The poet is gazing upon a picture of a little girl lying in a field of flowers and playing with roses. He looks into her future and sees her excelling Cupid in power to inspire love. In the third stanza he prays that she will not try her power on him. In the fourth stanza he asks her, since she is playing with flowers, to reform certain errors that spring has committed in creating flowers. In the fifth he advises her not to pluck the buds, lest Flora, goddess of vegetation, "make the example hers"—that is, pluck her, while she is yet a bud. Observe how much the poet makes out of the fact that the child is among the flowers. The metrical plan is whimsical and artificial: the poet is playing with his thoughts.

St. 3, *compound*: make peace. The imagery of the stanza is martial. St. 5, *ere we see*, etc.: lest Flora nip thee and all our hopes of thee in the bud, before we have really seen thee and them.

Read in a half-playful, half-serious manner, as if addressing a child. The fancies are finely humorous; bring them out clearly and musically. It is a charming little poem if you can get into the proper mood and can read it in the proper spirit.

106

This somewhat resembles the preceding lyric; but in this the poet is speaking to a young lady instead of to a little girl, and is looking back to her childhood instead of forward to her maidenhood. It sounds more earnest and sincere than the preceding one; yet we feel that it is but the flattering homage an old beau pays to a

young belle. The contrast between the infancy and the maturity of the maiden, and the partnership of Cupid and Venus, the one to make a lover of the poet and the other to make a beauty of the maiden—all this is expressed with delicate skill.

Read in a semi-regretful, semi-humorous style, suggesting the pretended sighs and courtly grace of a gallant of the old school. The reading should be light and dainty, like some old air played on the harpsichord.

109

A lyric gem, a perfect specimen of sincerity speaking in the courtly style of the period. Mark the simplicity of the words and images. Not a word is wasted: the poet in a few sentences gives a lifelike picture of a noble cavalier parting from his mistress. An entire poem lies in the word “nunnery”. The last stanza—indeed, the whole poem—has been much admired and quoted.

Read simply and earnestly, bringing out the pictures and the contrasts.

111

Even Milton tries his skill at the prevailing style. His tribute, however, is sincere and unaffected. Most of the sonnet is taken up with a description of Lady Margaret’s father, who was Earl of Marlborough, Lord High Treasurer, and President of the Council of James I. Milton says the breaking of the third parliament of Charles “broke him”: at least, he died four days afterwards.

dishonest victory: Isocrates, a Greek orator, here called “old man eloquent”, died four days after hearing the report of Philip the Great’s victory over the Athenians at Chaeronea.

Read with simplicity and sincerity.

113

An exquisite little piece in Herrick's characteristic style and on one of his favorite themes. Though direct and forceful, it is dainty and musical.

whenas: when, considering the fact that.

The poet is not scornful: he is only complimenting Dianeme and affectionately chiding her. Read to bring out the central thought and the poet's mood.

115

The poet sends a rose to his "fair, disdainful dame", telling it to bear her a message. He has formerly compared her to a rose; now she is to see the resemblance. Both are sweet and fair, but neither is of value unless seen of men. Then the rose is to die, that the maiden may realize how fleeting are sweetness and beauty. It is a pretty fancy, and it is worked out ingeniously and artistically. The movement is the capricious one, so popular during this period and the preceding.

In your reading suggest meditation, animation, and tenderness. The lyric sounds a pretty strain of music, which lies in the soft, gliding movement and in the subdued notes. You have not read this well until you have read it musically.

117

"Cherry ripe" was the cry of the street vendors of cherries. Here, of course, the cherries are the lady's lips, and "cherry ripe" is the signal she is to give that she is in the mood to love and be kissed. Perhaps the author is Thomas Campion: it is a favorite stanza form of his. The poem may be a trifle too luscious for our taste, but we cannot deny its delicacy and prettiness. The refrain is well employed.

The mood is of admiration rather than love. Read lightly and musically.

118

One of the gayest, most graceful, and most musical of the Golden Treasury lyrics. The theme, the mood of the poet, and the form and language of the poem are in exact accord. The poem is based on the custom of rising early on the first of May, to fetch flowers and boughs from the field and decorate doors and windows. The poet is to be thought of as standing outside his mistress' house, awaiting her, that they may set off together.

St. 1, *god unshorn*: Apollo, sometimes called imberbis, or beardless, Apollo. He is always represented as beardless. He was god of the sun. Aurora, the morning, ushers in Apollo, the sun. *bow'd toward the east*: as the Mohammedans in prayer. The flowers and the birds have said their prayers. *foliage*: dress, here used as suggesting the spring-time. St. 2, *against you come*: in anticipation of your coming. *dew-locks of the night*: a word coined by Herrick. It seems to mean "dewy locks", the hair of night wet with dew. *beads*: prayers. St. 3, *each field turns a street*: because so thronged with people. *each street a park*: because so adorned with branches. *to bring in may*: bring blossoms of hawthorn. St. 4, *many a green gown*, etc.: many a one has been tumbled in the grass. *Love's firmament*: the established home of Love.

Be sure that you feel and express the gayety, the high spirits of the poet. He is impatient to be off, and he hurries the tardy Corinna along with lively descriptions of the joys they are missing. The last stanza is a fine expression of the philosophy: "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we grow old." Whoever does not enjoy this ebullition of spirits, needs a tonic.

119

Most of the poets of this period took delight in blowing poetry bubbles. Here is one of the lightest and flimsiest of them. Let us not expect strength, nobility, or profundity; let us look for the qualities that belong to a bubble.

I *wantonness*: careless grace. *distraction*: disorder. *erring*: straying loose. *thereby*: beside it. *wild civility*: unconventional style. (This last is a poor paraphrase, but the idea can hardly be expressed in other words than the poet's. It is a figure of speech called oxymoron.) II *liquefaction*: referring to the rustling, liquid sound of the silk. *taketh*: bewitcheth.

The poet is, of course, toying with his theme. Observe the humorous exaggeration of the language. Read with assumed seriousness, betrayed by just a twinkle of fun.

123

Perhaps this is one of Quarles' mystical-religious poems, the "Best-Beloved" being Christ. Somewhat formal and artificial, but direct and sincere. The refrain is well used.

counter to my coin: a worthless piece of money compared to my wealth. A counter was a bit of cheap metal, used only for reckoning.

Read simply and earnestly.

125

The first four lines are apparently serious; but the last six lines, with the capricious metre and the suggestion of affectionate teasing, are to be read lightly.

127

The poet has been cast into prison through his loyalty to Charles I. But he is not really imprisoned, since his

thoughts are free, and he can think of Althea, perhaps be visited by her (St. 1); have the jovial companionship of his fellows (St. 2), and can praise his king (St. 3). It is a sincere and manly expression of resignation, high-spirited and noble, where one might expect a puling sentimentality. The last stanza is particularly beautiful and eloquent. The refrain is effective, serving, as it does, to conclude each thought and bind them all together, as well as to strike the key-note of the lyric.

with no allaying Thames: undiluted with water. *committed*: imprisoned, caged. *shriller throat*: that is, shriller than linnets. *enlarged*: unconfined.

It is a man's song, and voices the undaunted spirit of the gallant soldier, rejoicing in his spiritual liberty, though suffering bodily confinement. Read brightly and boldly.

128

The title explains the situation. The poem is somewhat metaphysical, and does not ring as bold and direct as others of Lovelace's, though it shows his high-spirited nature.

blue-god: Neptune, god of ocean. *faith and troth*: subject of "controls", the two subjects being considered as one idea. *highest sphere*: the crystalline sphere of the Ptolemaic astronomy.

Observe the variety in length of line, and the frequent alliteration. There is a pretty, unusual strain of music in this lyric: let it be sounded in your reading. Each stanza is composed of but one sentence, which should be read as one idea. Read brightly, energetically, and musically.

131

A striking contrast to some of the over-sentimental love ditties of the period: perhaps it was disgust at some

of them that moved the poet to utter this blasphemy. Sir Walter Raleigh had written a poem much in the same vein. Perhaps Wither had seen that, though most of Wither's work is characterized by the qualities we find in this selection. Observe that the theme of the first stanza is beauty; of the second, kindness; of the third, goodness; of the fourth, greatness; and that these qualities are restated in the last line of each stanza and summed up in reverse order in the first line of the last stanza.

pelican: often alluded to as a type of kindness, because it was said to permit its offspring to feed on its blood. *shall I play the fool*: perhaps with a reminiscence of Macbeth's words, "Why should I play the Roman fool and die?" *if not outward helps*, etc.: if she does not see in her suitor "outward helps", such as rank and riches, she reflects that a man who dares to woo her without such advantages would be able to accomplish almost anything if he had them.

Read boldly and energetically, with scorn and pride. The first four lines of the last stanza are tender and earnest, but the poem ends in the original key.

133

An old Scottish folk-song. The author is unknown. Probably the central idea was expressed by some one poetically gifted; then, as it was handed down by oral rendering, it was changed and improved; finally it was finished by some folk-artist. Its charm lies in its deep sincerity, its intense emotion, its directness and artlessness. Pay especial attention to the images from nature, used not only to give the setting, but also as symbols of feeling. Notice also the skilful musical alliteration, the occasional internal rhyme, and the frequent use of

“ē” as a rhyming vowel. The song is sung by a deceived and deserted Scotch maiden. Observe the naive and apparently inconsequent mention of the clothing the couple wore when they “came in by Glasgow town”. It is a natural, pathetic touch.

waly: an exclamation of woe. The “a” is broad. *aik*: oak. *syne*: after. *lichtly me*: treat me lightly, deceitfully. *busk*: adorn. *Arthur-seat* and *Saint Anton’s wall*: places near Edinburgh. *Marti’mas*: St. Martin’s Feast is November 11. *fell*: fierce.

This is the heartbroken lament of a forsaken girl. Reconstruct by your imagination the whole picture, then read it with all the simple pathos you can express. Read rhythmically, even though you have to shift the accent from the syllable that would naturally receive it. Slightly stress the alliterative syllables.

134

A simple, rather plaintive lullaby, full of genuine maternal love. The refrain is soft and melodious.

I grieve that duty, etc.: I am sorry that what I am able to do falls short of what I would wish to do.

Read softly and simply and rhythmically.

135

One of the few poems in the Golden Treasury which suggest a story. The poet is with his sweetheart when his foe, perhaps his rival, shoots at him from ambush across the river. Helen throws herself in front of her lover and is killed. He pursues his foe and slays him. The story is told in four stanzas, 2-5; the rest of the poem is lyric—in truth, it is all more lyrical than narrative. The poem is wonderful in its simplicity, its irresistible pathos, its artful artlessness. Observe the repe-

titions, especially of the idea of the first stanza, the repetition of the musical name, Kirconnell lea. Observe the use of the “ē” sound to close each stanza. Observe the effect of repeating the line, “I hackéd him in pieces sma’”: it is as if the speaker relates this part of the story with peculiar zest.

burd: maiden, a sort of title.

In your reading express as much of the pathos of the story as possible. There is but one word that is out of place; “succour”; every other word has all the terrible sincerity of bereavement, and bereavement under unusually affecting circumstances. A certain grim ferocity is in the fourth and fifth stanzas. Do not try to “elocute”; but put yourself into the mood and read naturally.

136

One of “life’s little ironies”. As the preceding poem might be called tenderly pathetic, this is horribly or gruesomely pathetic. This effect is produced largely by having the two corbies reveal the situation, as their callous language makes the pathos more poignant. Perhaps the knight was killed by the man that afterward married the lady.

corbies: crows. *fail*: turf. *hause-bane*: neck-bone. *gowden*: golden. *theek*: thatch.

Read simply. If a touch of scorn creeps into the language of the corbies, it will the better reveal the situation and the emotion. But try merely to set forth the situation and let the emotion go home of its own force. The rhythm should be pronounced and the alliteration should strengthen it.

138

If the third and fourth stanzas, which are somewhat affected and turgid, were as perfect as the other stanzas,

this poem would be extremely beautiful. It has a certain solemnity of mood and expression; and the implied comparison between the deserted bird's nest and the body is appropriate and suggestive. The alliteration and assonance are very apparent—too apparent in some places.

doth trample on: is superior to, overpowers. *mark*: boundary.

Read with dignity and solemnity.

139

A delicate, graceful little poem. Many of Herrick's choicest lyrics contain some reference to beauty and joy fading and dying. Observe the irregularity in length of line. Observe the musical sounds. The first lines of each stanza rhyme, which cements the stanzas closely.

pledges: offspring. *brave*: showy.

Pretty fancy and dainty music are the characteristics of this lyric. Notice how the movement seems to descend from the fourth line to the end of each stanza. Let the voice gradually soften until it is almost a whisper.

142

A series of quiet, meditative thoughts in a flower-vegetable-fruit-garden. The emotion is slight; but the language, though often abstruse and stilted, is, for the most part, rich and suggestive. The expletive "do" weakens some passages. The somewhat monotonous versification fits the theme and the mood.

St. 1, *amaze*: perplex. *palm, oak, bays*: crowns from these trees signify honors in war, statesmanship, literature. *single herb*, etc.: in contrast to the many trees the poet has. *whose short and narrow-vergéd shade*, etc.: whose shade is so scanty compared with the labor they

have exerted to win honors that it upbraids, or reproaches, them. St. 2, *your sacred plants*, etc.: the flowers of Quiet and Innocence, if they will grow at all on earth, will grow only in a garden like this. *society is all but rude*: almost the only society is that of wild nature. St. 3, *amorous*: here apparently, love-inspiring. St. 5, *curious*: delicate, exquisite. St. 6. This stanza may be paraphrased as follows: Meanwhile the mind does not remain stupefied with its own happiness as much as it would with other kinds of pleasure. The mind is usually an ocean where each nature finds its like; but here it creates far different worlds and then annihilates them, makes them dwindle to the dimensions of the garden. St. 7, *body's vest*: this vesture, the body. *whets*: preens. *waves*, etc.: waves its wings to bring out the varied lights on its plumes. St. 8, *what other help*, etc.: what pleasure could be suitably added to solitude. St. 9, *this dial*: referring to a sort of clock of flowers, which open at different hours of the day.

This poem needs careful study. In reading it, let your attention be concentrated on making the thoughts clear. Bring out clearly the suggestive ideas. Enjoy the mild enthusiasm of the poet, and let your reading express it.

144 and 145

"L'Allegro," the cheerful man; "Il Penseroso," the pensive, or grave man. In the former Milton presents a picture of the cheerful man's pleasures through the day; in the latter, the pensive man's. Both deal much with out of door scenes, so have been called lyrics of the landscape. The best way to study them is to compare them.

First, outline them. In "L'Allegro" the first 10 lines are devoted to the parentage and birth of Melancholy

and its banishment; in "Il Penseroso" the first 10 lines are devoted to the banishment of idle Joys. Lines 11-24 in "L'Allegro" give two possible genealogies of Mirth; lines 11-30 in "Il Penseroso" describe the garments and give the genealogy of Melancholy. Lines 25-36 in "L'Allegro" enumerate the companions Mirth is to bring with her; lines 31-44 in "Il Penseroso" describe Melancholy's appearance, and lines 45-60 enumerate her companions. You should make a complete outline of both poems, comparing and contrasting. Notice that a pleasure in one poem is set off against a pleasure in another; or that when the pleasures are of the same general kind, as music, they differ in important respects. Observe that the Cheerful Man's day begins in the morning; the Pensive Man's, at night. There is more briskness in the former, more of the joys of companionship, more sounds.

144. L. 5, *uncouth*: unknown. L. 9, *ragged*: irregular. L. 24, *buxom*: gladsome, lively. L. 34, *fantastic toe*: the epithet "fantastic" or lively, is here transferred from the dance to the foot. L. 45, *to come*: same construction as "to hear", in line 41. *in spite of sorrow*, etc.: to come to my window in spite of my sorrow that the dawn has risen and the lark has ceased singing. L. 53, *listening*: modifies "I" understood. *not unseen*: in Il Penseroso the man is unseen. The cheerful man desires witnesses of his pleasure. L. 67, *tells his tale*: counts his sheep. L. 83, *Corydon, Thyrsis, Phillis, Thestylis*: names of shepherds and shepherdesses. L. 91, *secure*: free from care. L. 102, *Faery Mab*: the fairy who sends dreams. L. 103, *she*: a certain maiden; here almost a demonstrative pronoun, as is "he" in the next line. *Friar's lantern*: jack o' lantern. L. 105, *drudging Goblin*: some of these fairies would labor hard all night if

a bowl of cream were set out for them. *tower'd cities*, etc.: perhaps Milton means that he here begins to read, not that he goes in person to the city. L. 132, *Jonson's learned sock*: the sock was the shoe worn by the Greek comedians. Jonson's plays were full of learning. L. 133, *Fancy's child*: child of Imagination. L. 134, *warble*, etc.: Shakespeare is here contrasted with Jonson. He is thought of as having written without pains, as singing extempore. L. 139, *bouts*: folds. L. 141, *wanton heed and giddy cunning*: oxymorons, meaning that the melody, though gay and spontaneous, is, nevertheless, artfully constructed.

145. L. 18, *Prince Memnon's sister*: Hemera. Memnon was the handsomest of warriors, and Milton credits his sister with the same degree of beauty. L. 19, *Ethiope queen*: Cassiope. L. 36, *decent*: graceful. L. 46, *spare*: lean. Because of his fasting he has visions. L. 53, *fiery-wheeled throne*: see Ez. 10, 2. Contemplation is thought of as taking a long flight, carrying the intellectual and emotional powers along. L. 55, *hist*: to bring along silently. L. 59, *dragon yoke*: Night's chariot was fabled to be drawn by dragons. L. 60, *accustom'd oak*: the oak where the nightingale is accustomed to sing. L. 78, *removed*: remote. L. 87, *outwatch the Bear*: the constellation, the Great Bear. As it never sets, the poet intends to stay up all night to read Hermes and Plato. L. 88, *unsphere the spirit of Plato*: bring him back from his station in the other world by reading his books. L. 95, *consent*: sympathy. The demons are thought of as having power over the planets and the elements. L. 99, *Thebes*: several Greek tragedies make Thebes the scene of the action. *Pelops' line*: referring to tragedies by Aeschylus about Agamemnon, a descendant of Pelops. L. 100, *tale of Troy*: not Homer, but tragedies on Troy.

L. 102, *buskined stage*: tragic stage, the buskin being a boot worn by Greek tragic actors. L. 109, *that left half-told*: Chaucer, who did not finish his Squire's Tale. L. 116, *if aught else*: perhaps referring to Spenser's Faery Queen. L. 124, *the Attic Boy*: Cephalus, who was beloved of Eos, the Dawn. L. 130, *minute drops*: drops falling at short intervals. L. 139, *close*: secret. L. 148, *wave at*, etc.: let some mysterious dream come floating or waving near Sleep's wings, in an airy stream of imaginative imagery, which gently falls on my eyes. L. 170, *spell*: study closely.

The tone of both these poems is quiet and meditative. The Cheerful Man sees the brighter aspects of nature and life; the Pensive Man, the more serious aspects—that is about all the difference. The Cheerful Man is not frivolous, nor the Pensive Man gloomy and melancholy: they merely emphasize different pleasures. The metre is the same in both: the lines are pentameter; and the feet are sometimes iambic, sometimes trochaic. Perhaps it is best to regard the movement as iambic and to consider the lines that begin with an accent merely as iambic lines lacking the unaccented syllable of the first foot. Both poems have a brisk movement, which is more pronounced in the first than in the second. The poet has shifted his accents artfully, thus preventing the monotony so frequent in tetrameter verse in couplets. Alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeic effects, exquisite and picturesque phraseology, figures of speech—these are some of the characteristics of the language. The diction is unusually rich—so rich that the student should study the words very carefully in order to extract the full meaning and suggestiveness.

The sentences are often long and involved and the meaning obscure. In your reading, strive for clearness,

adequate expression of the "concentrated" diction, grace and lightness, and rhythm. Allow your voice to follow the natural emphasis, so that your reading will not be monotonous. Observe the onomatopoeic effects, and express them vividly.

146

Supposed to be sung by the Puritan refugees, who fled from England during the reign of Charles I to escape Archbishop Laud's persecutions ("prelate's rage"). The poet is more interested, however, in setting forth the blessings of the exiles than in expounding political or religious ideas. The mood is cheerful, as in "L'Allegro"—that is, mildly cheerful, not gay and sprightly: the exiles sing a "holy and a cheerful note." In mood, movement, even in phraseology, the poem resembles the two of Milton just studied.

apples: pineapples. The plant bears only one fruit. *proclaim*: reveal, throw up. *of which we rather boast*, etc.: we rather boast of the gospel pearl than of the costly ambergris.

Read rhythmically and with restrained enthusiasm.

147

Milton was very fond of music. Here he represents himself as listening to a choir singing solemn, sacred music. In imagination he hears the music of the angels, and he wishes that mortals could hear that music, as they did before sin came into the world. It is a beautiful poem, as solemn and melodious as the music that forms the theme.

pledges: offspring. *sphere-born*: born of the music of the spheres. *sense*: sensations. *phantasy*: imagina-

tion. *concert*: harmony. *saintly shout and solemn jubilee*: splendid oxymorons. *disproportion'd*: misshapen, ugly.

This lyric is almost a chant. Only broad, sonorous tones are employed, and the movement is swelling and majestic. Read in a deep, solemn tone, rather rhythmically, yet slowly and majestically. The undertone of some lyrics resembles the liquid notes of a flute; others, the blare of a trumpet; the undertone of this lyric is the full, deep, sustained music of a pipe organ.

151

This, like No. 86, was written in honor of St. Cecilia's Day. The theme is the same: the power of music to raise the different emotions. In this poem the theme is developed by showing the effect on Alexander the Great of the music of Timotheus, a distinguished musician of Thebes. The first stanza reveals the situation; the second introduces the musician and his prelude, which is in honor of Jove, whom Alexander claims as his father; the third is in praise of wine; the fourth is a dirge for Darius, in order to check Alexander's pride, raised by the preceding strain; the fifth is in honor of love; the sixth is a call to battle and vengeance, so compelling that it breaks up the banquet and sends the banqueters out to burn the residences and temples of the Persians. The final stanza summarizes, and compares Timotheus with his flute and lyre to Cecilia with her organ.

St. 2, *a dragon's fiery form*, etc.: Jove took the form of a serpent to gain access to Olympia, mother of Alexander. *radiant spires*: glittering coils. *a present deity*: a god is here, said in flattery of Alexander. *assumes*

the god: pretends to be a god. St. 3, *honest*: handsome. St. 4, *the master*: Timotheus. *he*, l. 6, refers to Alexander. *his hand*: Timotheus'. *his pride*: Alexander's. St. 5, *love was in the next degree*: Alexander had been feeling pity; now he is to feel love, which is akin to pity. *the fair*: the fair one, Thais, the celebrated Greek beauty, who accompanied Alexander on his Asiatic expedition. St. 6, *the Furies*: the avenging deities, who had snakes twined in their hair. *unburied*: an unburied body was thought to be dishonored. *like another Helen*, etc.: referring to the destruction of Troy by Helen. The destruction of Persepolis by Alexander at the request of Thais is told by Plutarch. St. 7, *added length to solemn sounds*: the organ made long, sustained musical notes possible. *he raised a mortal*, etc.: Timotheus made a god of Alexander; Cecilia, so the legend runs, drew an angel down from heaven to listen to her music.

The repetitions, the irregularity in metre, in line length, in stanza length, and in rhyme plan, all suggest that the poem is for music. The suggestions of the different kinds of music are not so distinct as to be imitative, as in Dryden's other song on the subject. The rollicking drinking song in stanza 3; the soft, pretty love song in stanza 5, with its liquid sounds and musical feminine rhymes; and the harsh battle cry in stanza 6—all are splendid examples of onomatopoeia. In reading, modulate your voice to express the different moods. Most of the poem is to be recited, rather than read—that is, it should be higher or lower, softer or stronger, than the speaking voice. Read the stanzas over and over until you have trained your voice to bring out the varying emotions.

BOOK THREE

152

It is a morning in April. All nature rejoices in the spring, forgetting the hardships of winter. But man, having the power to look back to the past and look forward to the future, obtains a keen pleasure from the contrasts, and even in sorrow can rejoice through memory or hope.

This lyric, like most of Gray's poetry, is filled with subdued emotion and characterized by careful finish. You must read the poem closely and reflectively, observing the exquisite phrases, visualizing the sepia-tinted pictures, and listening to the soft, liquid measures of the music.

St. 2, *his*: the antecedent is "April". St. 3, *sullen year*: winter. *forward and reverted eyes*: eyes that look both forward and backward. St. 4, *deepest shades*, etc.: the object of "gilds", the subject of "gilds" being "hope". St. 5, *view*: imperative mood, like "see". *chastised*: chastened, softened. *blended, form*, etc.: when they are blended with skilful contrast, they form the strength and harmony of life.

The poem was not finished, which accounts for the abrupt conclusion.

Observe the unusually pretty notes, and examine a stanza or two to see how carefully Gray has chosen his words. Notice the "o's" in the first line of the first stanza; the alliteration of "w" in the second, third and fourth lines; the "a's" in the fifth line; the alliteration of "lightly" and "living" in the seventh line; the "e's" in the last line. Notice that the first two lines of each stanza begin with the accented syllable, thus giving a

trochaic impetus to the line; notice that the third line is short, somewhat checking the movement.

Read quietly and rhythmically, and put all the music into your voice that you can. Emphasize the contrasts.

153

The title is somewhat misleading. Collins means sincerity, rather than verbal simplicity. As a matter of fact, his language is anything but simple, as this poem will show. His ode is in praise of genuine, sincere, and natural emotion as expressed in poetry.

The poem has a definite outline. The first two stanzas are an invocation to Simplicity. The next three continue the invocation by calling to witness certain favorite objects and scenes of poetic Simplicity. Stanzas six and seven state that Simplicity has left Rome and has now no abiding place. The last two stanzas bring out the idea that though taste and genius are desirable, Simplicity is indispensable, and it is Simplicity that the poet seeks.

St. 1, *numbers*: verses. *who first*, etc.: who first nursed the powers of song in Imagination, loveliest child, either thy babe or Pleasure's. St. 2, *trailing pall*: the long garment worn by Grecian tragic actors. *decent*: becomingly dressed. St. 3, *Hybla's thymy shore*: a mountain in Greece noted for its thyme, which attracted the bees. This part of Greece was the home of pastoral poetry, which makes Collins' mention of it appropriate. *her*: the nightingale, a favorite bird of Sophocles, "sad Electra's poet." St. 4, *Cephisus*: a river near Athens, here referred to as a stream frequented by Simplicity. *enamelled*: covered with flowers. *when holy Freedom died*, etc.: when Freedom died in Greece, no other spot allured thy feet to roam in future times. St. 6, *one*

distinguished throne: the throne of Augustus, whose reign was the golden age of Latin literature. St. 7, *the Passions*: the emotions of poetry. Collins here refers to the love poetry of Italy. "Italy" is the antecedent of "her." St. 8, *what each*, etc.: what each gift of genius can furnish, what all such gifts can furnish, may charm the eye, but only thou, Simplicity canst raise the soul, the soul which rises to meet thee. St. 9, *of these*: taste, genius.

The predominant characteristics of this poem are melody, a wealth of beautiful images expressed in well-chosen phrases, dignity, and high seriousness. It is very beautiful music: read over some of the most melodious lines and listen to the pleasant murmur. Observe the metrical scheme: the two short lines followed by a long one, which makes a constant rise and fall in the movement. The clauses end on the long lines. Observe that the sentences sometimes extend from stanza to stanza.

Read quietly, clearly, and simply. Endeavor to bring out the involved meaning and to make the whole poem musical.

156

A mock-heroic poem. A favorite cat of Horace Walpole's, a friend of Gray, had been drowned in a tub of gold-fishes. Gray treats the affair as of great importance and lavishes poetic and conventional ideas upon it, only occasionally revealing the smile on his face by adding a burlesque touch.

St. 2, *conscious*: sympathetic—here used humorously to signify that the tail shares the cat's emotions. St. 3, *had she gazed*: would she have gazed. *Genii*: guardian spirits, here referring to the gold-fishes. St. 4, *Nymph*: here used for the cat. It is in using such poetic terms for commonplace ideas that Gray's nonsense is at its

best. St. 6, *eight times*: because, of course, a cat has nine lives.

The mock-heroic conception is fundamental in this poem. In addition to the passages pointed out, notice: "She purred *applause*"; the sudden descent to matter-of-fact in the line, "What cat's averse to fish?"; the ridiculous idea of the cat mewling "to every watery God"; the mixture of the Dolphins and Nereid with the hired man and the chambermaid; the pretended seriousness of the moral in the line, "A favorite has no friend", and in the last stanza.

You cannot read this poem well unless you catch the mood of the poet. Read very seriously and solemnly and pompously until you come to the passages where the poet is unable to hold in any longer and reveals his humorous attitude; then make a sudden change to the dry, prosaic, matter-of-fact tone. Make your reading a mingling of pathos and bathos. It is a delightful poem when well read.

157

A pretty, delicate little lyric, addressed to a small girl. Observe the gay, dancing movement, which exactly fits the theme and the mood. The short lines rhyming in couplets, a detail being added in almost every line, the spontaneous tripping of the verses—all this makes the poem graceful. Observe that the last two lines are in a different metre, as if added in a more sober, reflective tone.

timely: early. *yet*, line 13, means "as yet", with the thought of the difference when the child is grown.

Read gayly, rhythmically. Read the last two lines more seriously.

159

This poem is based on a tradition that Edward the First during his conquest of Wales had all the Welsh poets slain to prevent their stirring up the people. As the King and his army are marching through a narrow pass in Wales, an aged poet appears on an overhanging promontory and pronounces woe on the royal house and foretells the future; then leaps from the rock. The poem is difficult to understand; but after the language is unravelled and the allusions mastered, the poem stands out as one of the most striking and imaginative odes in the language.

St. 1, *Cambria*: Wales. St. 2, *vocal*: resounding. *Hoel* and *Llewellyn*: *Cadwallo*, *Urien*, *Modred*, noted Welsh bards. These were all much earlier than the time of Edward, but the bard in the poem speaks of them as contemporaries. St. 3, *I see them sit*: in imagination the bard sees his companions sitting on a nearby cliff, from which they join with him in his poetic prophecy—stanzas 4, 5, 6, and part of 7. This song and prophecy is spoken of as “woven”. St. 4, *characters*: figures, marks, letters. *when Severn*, etc.: a reference to the murder of Edward the Second in Berkley Castle. *She-wolf of France*: Isabel of France, wife of Edward the Second. *from thee be born*, etc.: from thee (Isabel), be born the one who is to be the scourge of heaven, Edward the Third. The following lines refer to his conquests. St. 5, *the sable warrior*: Edward, the Black Prince. He died before his father. *the rising morn*: Edward the Second. The following lines describe the luxury and magnificence of his reign, and his death by starvation. St. 6, *long years of havoc*: the Civil wars of the Roses. *kindred squadrons*: Englishmen against Englishmen.

ye towers of Julius: part of the Tower of London was supposed to have been built by Julius Caesar. *London's lasting shame*: because so many kings and princes were murdered there. *his consort's faith*: the steadfastness of Margaret, wife of Henry the Sixth, the "meek usurper." Margaret tried to save him from death. *his father's fame*: fame of Henry Fifth. *the rose of snow*, etc.: referring to the Wars of the Roses. *we spread*: on the loom. The bards are *weaving* their prophecy. *bristled boar*: the silver boar was the emblem of Richard the Third. *in infant gore*: referring to the murder of the two young princes by Richard. St. 7, *half of thy heart*: thy wife. Eleanor, wife of Edward the First died shortly after the conquest of Wales. *Stay, oh stay*: here the ghostly bards finish their prophecy, leaving the one bard alone. *But oh! what solemn scenes*, etc.: the bard now sees a vision of England's "genuine kings." *long-lost Arthur*: The Welsh believed that King Arthur would return to rule England. St. 8, *a form divine*: Elizabeth. She was descended from the Welsh. *strings symphonious*: referring to the poetry of Elizabethan times. *Taliessin*: a noted Welsh poet. St. 9, *fierce war*, etc.: a reference to Spenser, whose "Faery Queen" treats of "Fierce wars and faithful loves." *truth severe*, etc.: referring to the moral truths in the allegory of the "Faery Queen." *buskined measures*: the plays of Shakespeare. *a voice as of the cherub-choir*: Milton. *distant warblings*: the lesser poets after Milton.

It will aid to the understanding of this difficult poem if you know its structure. It is a Pindaric ode. The first and second stanza are composed of 14 lines each, the third of 20 lines; the fourth and fifth of 14 each, the sixth of 20; the seventh and eighth of 14 lines each, the

ninth of 20. The stanzas that have the same number of lines have the same rhyme-plan. It is a very complicated metrical plan: Gray's careful art is very evident.

The poem should be studied closely many times before it can be fully appreciated. It is full of verbal beauties, and the perfection of form and finish make it a masterpiece. The language is lofty, picturesque, and musical.

Read throughout in a strong, resonant tone. Make the prophecy of the bards especially strong and majestic; parts of it should be almost chanted.

162

This ballad was published anonymously, and for a time it passed as one of the old "popular" ballads, just discovered. It has a good many of the qualities of the old ballads: simplicity, sincerity, pathos, and sympathy with common life. This is partly due to the fact that the author wrote but few poems and was deeply versed in the old ballads.

The battle of Flodden Field was fought in 1513. The Scotch were defeated, the Scotch king and many of his nobles killed. The poem, however, is a lament for the common soldiers.

St. 1, *loaning*: a lane between fields of grain. *wede away*: vanished. The suggestion is of flowers pulled up like weeds. St. 2, *bughts*: sheepfolds. *scorning*: joking. *dowie*: dreary. *daffin'*: jesting. *gabbin'*: scoffing. *leglin*: milk-pail. St. 3, *har'st*: harvest. *bandsters*: sheaf-binders. *lyart*: grizzled. *runkled*: wrinkled. *fleeching*: teasing. St. 4, *bogle*: ghost. St. 5, *dool*: woe.

The ballad is very musical. Observe the frequent alliteration, the internal rhyme and assonance, and the many broad vowels. The internal rhyme is feminine,

which gives an additional note of music. The metre is anapestic, but trochees and iambs usually begin the lines. The variations assist in creating the impression of spontaneity, and break up the monotony of the movement. The refrain and the repetition of the idea of the first stanza serve to fix the leading idea.

The point of view is that of a Scotch woman lamenting the death of the Scotch youths. The emphasis is kept upon the feeling of the Scotch maidens.

Read with a sense of the situation: with deep sympathy and simple sincerity. The graceful music seems to add a touch of poignancy to the poem; read musically. In the middle of the first and third lines of each stanza a caesura occurs: make a slight pause here; but keep the tempo rather strict throughout.

165

The naked simplicity of this lyric has often been admired. Without employing many of the usual arts of the poet, using the simplest, most prosaic diction, Cowper has created a poem of great force and dignity, with a sombre, yet martial music.

The "Royal George" sank in Portsmouth harbor. The vessel had been injured slightly, so that it was necessary to lay her a little on her side. While the repairing was going on, Admiral Kempenfeldt was writing in his cabin. The carpenters keeled the vessel too far over, a land-breeze struck her, and she went down almost instantly, drowning the Admiral and about a thousand persons, including visitors and sailors.

Read simply and earnestly. Read rhythmically, but do not allow the feeling for rhythm to compel you to phrase incorrectly. Stress the strong words.

169

This poem reminds one of some of those in the second book. The poet desires to win his mistress' love and is willing to do anything to please her. The first and third stanzas are martial, the second courtly, the whole poem gallant and chivalric.

throw me: believe. *but if fond love*, etc.: if love can win you, I can truly say that I have never loved any but you, that I have never broken a vow, and that no maiden owes her ruin to me. *ride the ring*: referring to the old sport of riding at full speed under a suspended ring and catching it on the point of a lance. *the blue*: the color of Scotland.

Read earnestly, simply, and rhythmically. Read the more martial lines with vigor and determination. Insert the refrain in the second stanza, and read the refrain each time musically and sincerely.

170

A very musical little lyric. The central idea is the similarity between the maiden and a pure stream of water, and this idea is carried throughout gracefully and prettily. Notice the exceedingly soft, musical sounds of both vowels and consonants.

Read simply and musically. If you utter a harsh sound, you have not read the poem as it deserves. Perhaps the voice should be pitched lower than usual.

173

The central idea of this poem is: As the merchant, sending a valuable cargo, puts a false label on it that it may go the more safely, so I profess love to Euphelia, that I may make love to the modest Cloe. In the last

stanza the trick is discovered, and Venus remarks to the cupids that the three are at last revealing their feelings.

It is a fanciful, graceful little poem, half-playful, half-serious. When well read, it is delicately musical. In your reading bring out the contrasting ideas: the pretended love to Euphelia, the true love to Cloë.

174

It is difficult to interpret Blake's poems. They are so gauze-like that any handling tears the delicate fabric. The main thought of this poem is that love should not be told, that it, like the wind, should move silently, invisibly. The poet told his mistress all his love, and in fear she left him. Soon afterward another, a mere casual acquaintance, took her by merely sighing out his love. Or, perhaps the "traveller" is Death.

The metre is simple and not strictly regular. If you read well, you will feel a vague, indefinable charm and hear a sweet, plaintive music.

176

One of the most beautiful of all Burns' beautiful songs. A Scotch girl, deceived and deserted, visits the banks and braes of the Doon river, where she had met her lover. The gladness of nature appeals to her as cruel. The bird singing so happily reminds her of her former joy. She remembers the occasion when she pulled a rose from a bush: in that, too, she sees a symbol of her life.

Feel the deep pathos of the situation, let your imagination reconstruct the story and enter into the maiden's emotions; then read simply, mournfully, musically. A touch of reproach should come into the voice

in the expression of the thought that the flowers and birds are unsympathetic.

177

In this ode Gray gives a poetic description and history of poetry. The ode bears the impress of careful and studious workmanship. It is structurally perfect, and the details are perfectly finished and fitted into the general plan. Gray's love of poetry, his admiration of the Pindaric ode, his habit of working for a long time, polishing and improving, his taste in the use of words, his power to paint graphic pictures with few words, and his keen ear for the melodies of tone-combinations—all this makes the ode one of the choicest productions of its kind in the language.

The poem has three sections, three stanzas making up a section. The first two stanzas of each section contain twelve lines each, the third stanza, seventeen. The rhyme scheme is the same for the first two stanzas of the sections, and a different rhyme scheme is employed for the third stanza of each section. All the stanzas are elaborate in metre.

The first section is a general description of the power of poetry, especially of lyric poetry. The first stanza draws a comparison between poetry and a stream; the second speaks of the power of poetry to calm the passions, even of the gods; the third stanza speaks of the power of poetry to inspire joy and gayety. The second section treats of the strength and universality of the power of poetry. The fourth stanza discusses the power of poetry to dispel the sorrows of mankind; the fifth stanza develops the thought that the influence of poetry is felt in both the frigid and torrid climes. The sixth stanza

speaks of poetry in Greece, of its departure from Greece, then from Italy, finally its arrival in England. The third section treats of certain great English poets. Shakespeare is the theme of stanza 7; Milton and Dryden, of stanza 8; Mason and Gray himself of stanza 9.

St. 1, *Aeolian lyre*: Pindar calls his poetry "Aeolian" songs. The Greeks called lyric poetry Aeolian because two of their greatest lyric poets lived in Aeolia. *Helicon's harmonious springs*: Helicon is a mountain range in Greece. Two springs came down from it. The region was sacred to the Muses. St. 2, *willing soul*: the soul that submits to thy rule. *enchanting shell*: the lyre. Here, as elsewhere, Gray speaks of lyric poetry as identical with music. *feathered king*: the eagle, emblem of Jove. St. 3, *tempered*: attuned. *sublime*: uplifted. St. 4, *gives to range*: allows to wander freely over. *Hyperion*: the sun. St. 5, *shaggy forms*: polar bears. *laid*: a participle modifying "Muse." *repeat*: sing verses to. *loose numbers*: spontaneous, irregular verses. *generous Shame*: the feeling of mortification that comes when one falls short of an ideal. St. 6, *Delphi*, etc.: the names in this stanza are names of places in Greece noted for some connection with Greek literature. *Albion*: England. St. 7, *thy*: Poetry's. *Nature's darling*: Shakespeare, whom Gray calls Nature's favorite child because he was taught by Nature rather than in schools. *what time*: when. St. 8, *Extasy*: inspiration. *he passed*, etc.: referring to Milton's "Paradise Lost," wherein Milton describes heaven and hell. *blasted with excess of light*: a beautiful allusion to Milton's blindness. *two coursers*: referring to the heroic couplet. "Coursers" is the subject of "bear"; "car" is the object. St. 9, *his hands*: this probably refers to Gray's friend, Mason, whose poetry Gray much admired. *what daring spirit*:

referring to Gray himself, as does the remainder of the stanza. *Theban eagle*: Pindar. *orient hues*, etc.: colors as bright as those of the rising sun, but not of the sun because they are imaginative, divine. *vulgar*: common, usual.

There is so much to admire in this ode that it is not possible to do justice to it in a few words. You must read and read and re-read the poem, carefully and lovingly. Among the beautiful passages in the ode may be mentioned the metaphor in the first stanza, the gay, sprightly music of the first part of the third stanza, modulating to a graceful, stately measure in the last part of the stanza; the striking characterizations of Shakespeare, Milton, and Dryden in the seventh and eighth stanzas; the majestic alexandrines that close each stanza; the delightful alliteration and rich assonances throughout the poem.

Gray has succeeded admirably in adapting the music to the varying ideas. The tones are light and airy or full and sonorous, as the thought is light or majestic; the movement is accelerated or retarded, as the theme suggests. In your reading strive to bring out the different tones and movements. In some places you should almost sing; in some places the rhythm should be very pronounced; in others, you should linger over the expressive, musical phrases. Read the last line of each stanza with force and majesty.

178

This ode suggests the two St. Cecilia odes by Dryden in the preceding book. Collins personifies the different Passions or Emotions, and has each of them try his own power of expression on Music's instruments. The first stanza introduces the theme, the last is an invitation to

Music to return to man, the intervening stanzas are devoted to the Emotions, as one by one they try their skill.

St. 1, *apart*: singly. St. 3, *owned*: confessed. St. 5, *lovely scenes at distance*: because Hope looks to the future. *close*: end of a strain. St. 6, *had she sung*: would she have sung. *war-denouncing*: war-proclaiming. *doubling*: echoing. St. 8, *diffusing*: a participle modifying "measures." "Calm", "love", and "musing" are the objects of "diffusing." St. 9, *oak-crowned Sisters*: the nymphs in the train of Diana. St. 10, *Tempe's vale*: a valley in Greece. St. 11, *mimic soul*: soul that can recall and imitate. *Recording Sister*: Clio, the Muse of History, sister to Euterpe, Muse of Music. *reed*: musical pipe. *e'en all at once*, etc.: even when heard all at once as in organ music.

The most noticeable characteristic of this lyric is the onomatopoeic effects. The first stanza and the last are in easy-flowing, simple tetrameter couplets; but the stanzas descriptive of the Passions are highly suggestive of the different strains of music evoked by the Passions. The metrical scheme in some of these stanzas is wild and irregular; in others, simple and definite. The words are chosen partly for their sounds, and are combined in such a way that they represent the veering moods.

Each stanza has its appropriate key. Read a stanza silently until you feel the emotion and discern the underlying musical motive, then try to voice that emotion with fitting tones and rhythm. This is one of the poems that lends itself to recitation, but you should be careful not to let your reading be too dramatic and "elocutionary." If you succeed in suggesting clearly and musically the prevailing emotion, you have read well.

180

Perhaps it will help us to make the thought in this lyric more concrete if we think of Infant Joy as a young child, though perhaps Blake meant merely to personify new-born Joy.

Observe the happy, graceful, delicate music, and the spontaneous rhythm. Read musically and softly. This is one of the songs that takes up lodgment in your memory by the mere beauty and vague magic of the words.

181

Another lyric gem. Observe the beautiful rhyme-sounds, "ē" and "ī" predominating. Observe the liquid sounds throughout. Observe the alliteration and the assonance, which is often carried over from one line to the next.

Read softly, tenderly, and musically. The last two lines of the poem are in a different key, expressing as they do a different emotion: sad realization that the child will some day experience the sorrows of life.

184

While out plowing, Burns turned up a field-mouse's nest. The incident led to a train of reflection, which ended in the composition of this well-known poem. Perhaps the most noteworthy feature of the lyric is the sympathy displayed for the little animal, and the comparison drawn in the last two stanzas between the fate of the mouse and of the poet.

St. 1, *sleekit*: sleek. *bickering brattle*: hurrying confusion. *laith*: loth. *pattle*: stick used to scrape the soil from the plough-share. St. 3, *whiles*: sometimes. *a daimen-icker in a thrave*: a small amount of grain from

an entire shock. *I'll get a blessing wi' the lave*: because I have been kind to you I will get a blessing with the remainder of the grain. St. 4, *silly*: weak. *big*: build. *foggage*: late grass. *snell*: sharp. St. 5, *coulter*: that part of the plough-share that is perpendicular to the point. St. 6, *but*: without. *hald*: dwelling. *thole*: endure. *cranreuch*: frost. St. 7, *thy lane*: alone. *gang aft agley*: go often awry.

This is a sincere expression of deep sympathy and kinship with the helpless creature. Remember that the poet is speaking to the mouse, and that his voice is kind and tender. Express the same feeling in your reading. Read the last two stanzas in a more reflective, sober tone, bringing out the strong contrast between the mouse and the man. Stress the word "men" in stanza seven.

186

One of the most charming of the meditative poems in the Golden Treasury. One sees the poet reclining on a mossy bank as evening draws on, and feels with him the quiet, subdued emotions called up by the twilight.

Notice that the first five stanzas make up the first sentence. "If aught, etc.," is the subordinate clause, "now teach me, etc.," stanza four, the principal clause. St. 1, *oaten stop*: shepherd's pipe. St. 6, *folding star*: the evening star, so called because at this time the sheep are seeking their fold. St. 11, *breathing*: fragrant. St. 13, *Fancy*: Imagination. *Science*: knowledge. The personification of abstractions in this stanza has been often criticized. But the four abstractions are appropriately spoken of in connection with evening.

The most peculiar feature of this lyric is that it is in un-rhymed verse. Many a person has read the poem entirely through without noticing this, so well has Col-

lins compensated for the absence of rhyme by the use of other qualities. Observe that almost every line ends with a strong word, usually a verb or a noun, and that it is usually a musical word. Observe that the stanzas run into each other, so that the impression is often that of blank verse. Observe also that the lack of rhyme is made up for by condensed thought, plentiful alliteration, and happy combinations of musical words. Very often a certain sound will occur throughout an entire stanza, as "o" and "s" in the first stanza, "e", "b" and "w" in the second stanza, the thin vowels and "s" and "b" in the third stanza, etc. The sound of "l" is prominent throughout. All this so fully satisfies the ear that the rhyme is not missed. And the absence of jingling rhyme-sounds helps give the soft, solemn, subdued note that characterizes the lyric. All told, it is a masterly poetic feat.

The key of the selection is pensiveness. It is like a painting by Corot. Or it is like an evening hymn on the organ. Read quietly, reflectively, bringing out distinctly and musically the slight variations from the dominant key.

187

Perhaps the best known of Gray's poems and the best known of the so-called "graveyard" poems. Perhaps the popularity of the *Elegy* is due largely to the fact that it expresses in beautiful, striking, and permanent form the emotions common to all mankind.

Like all of Gray's poems, the *Elegy* is a carefully finished work. Nine years are said to have elapsed between the first conception of the poem and its publication. The ideas are, of course, beautifully phrased: there is not an empty line in it. The graveyard on which the poem is based is in Stoke Pogis, where Gray himself

was later buried. The description given in the Elegy still fits the cemetery.

St. 1, *parting*: departing. St. 2, *air*: object of "holds", "stillness" being its subject. St. 6, *ply her evening care*: no definite picture is conjured up in the mind by these words. Perhaps they mean, preparing the evening meal. St. 9, *awaits*: the subject is "hour"—"boast", "pomp", etc., being the object. St. 10, *where through*, etc.: many of the upper classes were buried within the church. *fretted*: ornamented with narrow strips intersecting. St. 11, *storied urn*: a monument, or more likely, a tablet, containing an inscription concerning the dead. *animated bust*: statue so life-like that it seems alive. *provoke*: call forth. St. 12, *rich with the spoils of time*: the knowledge gained through all time. *rage*: inspiration. *genial*: cheerful and vigorous. St. 14, *gem*: object of "bear", "caves" being the subject. St. 15, *village-Hampden*: some villager as strong and patriotic in his narrow sphere as Hampden was in his wider one. *some mute Milton*: some one endowed with Milton's genius, but with his talent undeveloped. *Cromwell*: some one that could have been as great as Cromwell but who would not have been, like Cromwell, guilty of his country's blood. St. 16, *to command*: depends upon "forbad", in the first line of the next stanza. St. 17, *nor circumscribed*, etc.: their lot not only circumscribed their virtues, it also circumscribed their crimes. St. 18, *to hide*: depends upon "forbad", third line of preceding stanza. The line seems to mean, to conceal and repress the struggles of truth of which they are conscious. *heap the shrine*, etc.: referring to the degradation of poetry in Gray's time. Poets often courted the rich and great and dedicated their poems to them with fulsome flattery. St. 19, *madding*: raging. St. 20, *un-*

couth rhymes: referring to the fact that in the cemetery there are some grave-stones containing inscriptions written by rustic poets, some of the words being even misspelled. St. 22, *for who*, etc.: for who ever resigned this pleasing anxious being (life) to become a prey to forgetfulness, who ever left the warm region of life, without casting a look behind? St. 23, *e'en in our ashes*, etc.: even in the dead body exist the emotions of the living being—i. e., our bodies cry out to be remembered. St. 24, *thee*: Gray himself. *chance*: perchance. St. 28, *another*: another morning. St. 29, *for thou canst read*: implying that the "swain" cannot read. St. 30, *science*: knowledge. *frowned not on*: was not disdainful to him because of his humble birth. St. 31, *a friend*: perhaps referring to Horace Walpole, perhaps to Richard West, both of whom were friends of Gray. St. 32, *dread abode*: that is, the bosom of God.

The spirit of this poem is much like that of the preceding. It is, however, more sombre and melancholy. In your reading keep in mind the meditative, reflective nature of the poem. Read slowly and solemnly, lingering over the beautiful details and the musical sounds. You will have difficulty in making the meaning clear in some places. A few stanzas are grammatically connected with succeeding and preceding stanzas; these must be connected in the reading. Almost every stanza contains onomatopoeic effects. Notice, for example, the suggestive sounds in the second line of the first stanza: you can fairly *feel* the scene. Then observe the effect of the next line: the plodding movement is admirably suggested by the sounds and accents. Endeavor to bring out all these "echoes" in your reading. It is a poem that one can read hundreds of times without exhausting the charm.

190

One of Burns' perfect songs. It is hardly fair to call it a poem: it almost sings. There is a sincerity and simplicity, and a lyric limpidness difficult to match. Read earnestly and musically. Observe your reading carefully, and if you detect a discordant sound, you may be sure you have not read the poem perfectly.

192

The simple pathos of this ballad is beyond praise. The story is told with consummate artistic restraint: no words are wasted, yet the whole situation is portrayed in such a fashion that it is unforgettable. The poet has increased the natural sadness in the story by having the heroine voice her own emotions, in a restrained, yet artless style. The irregularity of the metre, the reminiscences of the old ballads, the little touches of nature—all contribute to the beauty of the poem. Observe how skilfully the situation is drawn in the first stanza, before the story is begun. Observe, too, how the story is interrupted now and then by an exclamation of sorrow.

a week but only twa: only two weeks—an idiom common in the old ballads.

Read the poem silently until you feel the pathos, then read aloud, simply, naturally, musically. Make the rhythm decided. You will notice that the prevailing metre is anapestic; but some of the feet have only two syllables, while others have four. Read by accented words, letting the unaccented syllables take care of themselves, as you do in all quantitative verse. Or, better yet, strive merely to stress the words that naturally deserve emphasis: in every case you will hit upon the right accent and preserve the swing of the movement. Bring out the alliteration.

193

A delightful contrast to the preceding. In a gay, rollicking measure it tells how Duncan Gray wooed Maggie, how she flouted him, how he, resenting her treatment of him, forswore her, how she wished him back, and how he relented—and they lived happy ever after. The fun and high spirits are thoroughly enjoyable.

wooing o't: the wooing of it, the wooing. *fou*: gay with tippling. *asklent*: aslant. *unco skeigh*: very skittish. *gart*: made. St. 2, *fleeched*: coaxed. *Ailsa Craig*: an island in the Firth of Clyde. *lowpin ower a linn*: leaping over a cliff. St. 3, *sair to bide*: hard to endure. St. 5, *smoorcd*: smothered. *crouse and canty baith*: both of them gay and jolly.

Read with vigor and liveliness. Make your reading reflect the merry mood of the poet. A little pretended seriousness in a few places will increase the humor. Insert the refrain lines in all the stanzas.

194

The sailor's wife has just heard that her husband's ship has returned. In a flutter of delight, she prepares to receive him. It is a lively picture of a woman, full of touches of nature.

St. 2, *bigonct*: little cap. St. 4, *thraw*: twist. St. 5, *caller*: fresh.

Let your reading suggest the eagerness and joy of the speaker. Read with energy and decision, but change to a calmer, quieter tone in the last two stanzas. Perhaps here we may imagine the wife speaking to herself.

195

An artistic, permanent expression of a fundamental emotion. Perhaps it seems easy to write such a simple

little poem; but the fact that we find so few perfect ones proves how difficult it is. Study the first line. Notice that the first three words are accented, suggesting weary reflection. Notice also the pretty assonance in the phrase, "happy days." In the third line, notice the alliteration of "l" and the assonance in "what lands." In the first line of the second stanza, notice the broad, solemn vowels, the alliteration of "h", and the slowness of the movement. In the second line notice the heavy falling of the "w's". In the next line notice the rapid movement, the stress resting on but one word, "glinted", and that a very picturesque word. Observe the pretty sound of the rhyme-word. It is a wonderful bit of simple art.

erie: fearful. *glinted*: flashed.

Read simply, sincerely, musically.

197

A theme not often used in poetry: the love of an old wife for her husband. In tenderness, in simplicity, and music, the song is a gem. The figure in the second stanza is beautiful and suggestive.

jo: sweetheart. *brent*: straight, smooth. Burns apparently uses it as an antonym to "bald". *pow*: head; a colloquial, intimate word, suggesting tenderness.

Try to feel the tenderness of the words. Read simply, rhythmically. Stress the alliterated words. Bring out the contrasts. The first four lines of each stanza deal with youth, the last four with old age.

199

The ode is based on a distant view of Eton College. As the poet looks at the distant towers, he reflects upon his youth spent here and upon the present and future of those now in school. It is not so highly finished, and

not so serious as many of Gray's poems: but the poet's heart is by no means gay, as he looks into the future and sees the ills awaiting the college boys.

St. 1, *Science*: knowledge. *Henry*: Henry VI, founder of the college. St. 2, *fields beloved in vain*: because Gray had no friend to share his pleasure in the scenes. The poem was written a short time after the death of the last of his intimate friends. *to breathe a second spring*: the sight takes the poet back to his boyhood. St. 3, *the captive linnet*, etc.: which ones catch the linnet and cage it? *rolling circle*: foot-ball. St. 4, *'gainst graver hours*, etc.: in preparation for class room work. St. 5, *buxom*: lively. *they are men*: therefore subject to the common fate of men. St. 7, *these*: certain ones, object of the verb "tear." St. 8, *this*: this person. *those*: others. St. 9, *painful family*: pain-inflicting ministers of death, such as Labor, Poverty, Old Age, all that affect the body.

Study carefully until you have mastered the intellectual details. The key-note of the poem is solemn melancholy, which changes in the third, fourth, and fifth stanzas to a decorous sprightliness. Keep the key-note in mind as you read, but depart from it as the music modulates. The movement is regular—so regular that you will have to make an effort to avoid monotony. Bring out the effective combinations of words and the musical sounds.

201

A splendid lyric—splendid in phrasal power, in imagery, in thought, in music. Its emotional plane is higher than most of Gray's poems. Observe how Gray's mind turns naturally to the graver, darker aspects of life.

St. 2, *birth*: child. St. 5, *thy suppliant*: Gray himself.

St. 6, *thy form benign*: in contrast to the appearance of Adversity as described in the preceding stanza. *philosophic train*: contrasting with "the vengeful band" in the preceding stanza. Gray seems to mean, the band of attendants that would teach him how to bear philosophically the ills of life. *generous spark extinct*: dead friendship. Gray had recently quarreled with his friend Walpole.

The Hymn is worth careful study and many readings. Observe how Gray carries a certain sound throughout a stanza: as "p", "b", "t", in the first stanza. The sounds seem to suggest the stern, "relentless power" of Adversity. Observe the solemn, majestic sound of the long line that ends each stanza. It seems to add weight and finality to the thought. Read carefully, deliberately, musically. The intellectual content is important: bring it out distinctly. Read the last two stanzas with earnest feeling.

203

A gracious, grateful, and eloquent sonnet. Cowper lived with the Unwins for many years, and he here and in the next poem records his love and gratitude to Mrs. Unwin.

eloquence: object-of "want." *I shed my wings*: I cease writing, the wings representing his inspiration. *a Book*: see Rev. 20, 12.

Observe that the first eight lines develop one thought, the last six lines, another. Observe how naturally and easily the poet states his thought: he apparently writes without effort. It is one of those rare poems in which the thought and expression seem to have existed forever and to have been found by the lucky poet.

Read simply, musically, earnestly. The poet feels every word he writes: give his feeling adequate expres-

sion. Read by ideas, not lines. Do not force the rhythm: read as the natural emphasis of the ideas seems to demand.

204

One of the tenderest, most personal and pathetic lyrics in the language. Surely it goes as far as speech can go in expressing love and gratitude. Cowper had suffered from an attack of melancholia twenty years before this, and was apprehensive of another. He sees his friend growing weaker, which he attributes to her anxiety and care for him. She died three years later. It is said that the poet Tennyson could never read this poem without tears.

Read the poem silently until you feel the mood, then read aloud with simplicity, tenderness, and pathos. Vary the line, "My Mary" to fit the sentiment of the stanzas. The poem is worth committing to memory, both for its own sake and as a specimen of what simple words can do in revealing emotion.

205

The incident on which Cowper bases this poem is found in Anson's "Voyage." One of the seamen was washed overboard in a storm. He swam for some time, but he could not be rescued in the storm. The poet here paints a vivid picture of the scene in all its pathetic details; but in reality he is painting a picture of his own struggles. The third line of the first stanza suggests this, and the reader keeps it in mind until the "semblance" is explicitly stated in the last stanza.

The pathos and horror of the story is the more affecting because Cowper tells the story so simply and directly. A less judicious poet would have filled the story with lamentations and adorned it with figures of speech.

Cowper's restraint seems pitiless, but we *see* the unfortunate man struggling in the ocean and we *feel* his anguish and despair.

Visualize the pictures clearly. Read with simplicity, directness. Read the last stanza in a more reflective and more gloomy tone, for here the thought is personal.

206

A pleasant contrast to the gloom of Cowper. The middle-aged man looks forward to Tomorrow and pictures such a life as he would like to live in old age. It is a group of pretty pictures. The movement is rapid and joyful, the feminine rhymes adding to the sprightliness. The recurrence of the "orow"-sound falls pleasantly on the ear.

pad-pony: easy-ambling pony. *Everlasting*: a sort of pun on eternity and a cloth called everlasting.

Read rhythmically and brightly. The movement halts in the second line of the last stanza; but elsewhere it moves along as smoothly as a "pad-pony." Stress the alliterative words. Make the poem "carol away idle sorrow."

BOOK IV

209

Keats had a high conception of the poet. Here he gives him a double immortality: in heaven, ll. 5-22; and on earth, ll. 23-26. Keats wrote this ode on a blank page in a copy of Beaumont & Fletcher's tragi-comedy, "The Fair Maid of the Inn," which may account for his calling poets, "bards of *Passion* (suffering) and of *Mirth*."

L. 5, *those*: the souls. *commune*: speak, sing—refer-

ring to the music of the spheres. *tented*: resting under tents made by large bluebells, hanging down inverted almost to the ground. *trancéd thing*: music sung in a trance, or emotional ecstasy. *where your other souls*, etc.: in the place where, etc.

The metre is tetrameter, with a trochaic swing; but a few lines have an extra syllable at the beginning, while others have an extra syllable at the end. Keats has shifted the pauses and accents so skilfully that the metre is flexible and spontaneous.

Visualize the pictures, master the details, observe and admire the striking phraseology and the light, delicate music—then read, brightly, fluently. Keep the rhythm, but do not let the pull of the rhythm force you to stress an insignificant preposition or conjunction or to ignore a strong noun or adjective. Keep the movement in your mind, but feel free to depart from it at any time. In this way you will avoid the monotony with which this poem is often read.

210

Keats began reading Chapman's translation of Homer one evening at the house of a friend, and became so interested that he read all night. The next morning his friend found this beautiful appreciation written in a fly-leaf of the volume.

Observe that in the octave Keats speaks of his previous reading under the figure of traveling. *western islands*: referring to the poets of England. *in fealty to Apollo*: subject to the authority of Apollo, god of music and poetry. *demesne*: land held by a chief under a king, here Apollo. *serene*: bright, clear atmosphere. In the sestet Keats develops a new idea: that when he started to read Chapman's Homer he felt like an astronomer discovering a new star, or like Cortez (Keats meant

Balboa) when he discovered the Pacific. Though he writes only three lines, how graphically the poet paints this discovery!

Read with clearness, force, and dignity. There is a strong, vigorous music in the verses, which you will bring out only by feeling the emotion and expressing it naturally. Try to express by your reading the awe and astonishment of Balboa and his men, as they gaze upon the Pacific. The poem is worth reading until it is committed to memory.

212

A very simple, sincere, and musical lyric. In the first two stanzas Byron contrasts the love of youth with the glory of old age. In the next two stanzas he develops the thought that glory is desirable only because it affects love.

myrtle and ivy: emblems of youthful joy, contrasted with the laurels, emblems of victory. *flower with May-dew besprinkled*: the dew of May was thought to have power to restore beauty. Here Byron speaks ironically of the belief. *discover*: reveal. *there*, l. 13: in his mistress' eyes.

The metre is anapestic, with feminine endings. It is a quick, lively-stepping movement. Read gayly, rapidly, joyfully, and above all, rhythmically. Do not let the movement halt for an instant.

213

This poem is found in "Rokeby," one of Scott's longer poems. It is sung by Edmund, one of a band of outlaws living in Greta woods. He belongs to a worthy family, but has become a fugitive. Some time after he has taken up this life, he rides back toward his home. His former sweetheart sees him from Dalton-Hall, and, in

a song, expresses her willingness to go with him. He asks her to guess what manner of life he is leading. She first guesses that he is one of the king's forest-rangers, then that he is a soldier. At last he informs her that he is an outlaw. Apparently she does not follow him, though the thought of living with him in Greta wood still attracts her.

St. 5, *fiend whose lantern lights the mead*: Will o' the Wisp.

Fill in the details of the story until you feel that you know the entire situation. If you will read a part of "Rokeby", you will understand better what kind of person Edmund is: begin with stanza 15 of the third canto. In your reading suggest the different speakers in the dialog, but do not try to imitate them. Bring out the story clearly. Read spiritedly and rhythmically, voicing the simple music.

214 .

A lyric of pure music, and, like music, it brings before the mind beautiful pictures. In order to see how musical the words are try to replace the word "be" in the first line, with "are". You would have the unpleasant combination "there are", and you would miss the alliteration of "be" and "Beauty's". Moreover, the use of the archaic form, "be", suggests tenderness and intimacy. Observe the soft, subdued sounds throughout the poem, especially in the rhyming words. There is not a harsh note in the lyric. The movement is graceful and flowing, suggesting "the swell of Summer's ocean." Observe the delicate music of the feminine rhymes.

Read lightly, musically. The second and fourth lines of each stanza contain but two accents: let the movement be retarded here.

216

Another of Byron's exquisite lyrics. Pure, simple, earnest and musical—no one but a poet and a musician could have written it.

all that's best of dark and light: referring to the darkness of the night and the light of the stars. *had half impaired*: would have half impaired.

Read tenderly, clearly, musically.

222

This well-known poem is well called "the education of Nature," for that is the central thought. Wordsworth believed devoutly in the power of Nature to influence personality and conduct. Here he shows Nature actually at work. Observe the simplicity of the language and the depth of thought.

St. 2, *law and impulse*: I, Nature, will teach Lucy obedience to the laws of Nature and yet will give her inspiration. St. 3, *sportive as the fawn*: she shall learn gayety from the fawn. *hers shall be the breathing balm*: she shall be disciplined to gravity and sweetness by the odor-breathing balm, the silence and the calm of inanimate nature. St. 4, *state*: condition of stateliness, gracefulness. This whole stanza tells how Lucy is to be made graceful through the influence of graceful objects in nature. St. 5, *beauty born of murmuring sound*, etc.: the sound of the rivulets shall so impress her that her very expression shall be affected.

In addition to the striking thought, the poem has beauty of phrase and melody. Wordsworth's power to express his ideas—vague and unusual as they are to most of us—in striking and rememberable phrase is evident when we try to paraphrase his language. There are several very effective combinations of words in this

poem. Observe the alliteration and the assonance. Observe that the third and sixth lines of each stanza are shorter than the others, serving to give variety and to check the movement for a moment before another idea is taken up. There are some onomatopoeic effects, notably in the latter part of the fifth stanza.

Read to make the ideas clear and musical. Observe that the clauses often end within the lines and that the meaning runs over from one line to another. Read, then, by ideas, not lines. Let the rhythm take care of itself, you being careful merely to phrase in such a way as to bring out the meaning. Tenderness and love should be expressed in every line. Bring out the deep, yet restrained grief of the last stanza.

223

A dirge, but so repressed and restrained that the reader needs to use all his imaginative power to feel the poet's grief. The first stanza expresses a common human intuition: that a loved one is secure against death. This sense of false security Wordsworth speaks of as slumber that sealed his spirit. The second stanza draws the contrast, now that the loved one is dead: she has lost all personality, is rolled round in the whirling earth, like all inanimate things.

Read simply, musically, tenderly, mournfully. The poet does not think of denying the immortality of the soul: he is merely intent on the contrast between the life and the death of the body.

226

This poem is founded on a real incident. Like the preceding poem, it is more narrative than lyric. One phase of Wordsworth's poetry is seen at its best here:

the simple, unadorned treatment of a theme. It has few of the qualities we usually associate with poetic language; yet in its simplicity and baldness of diction, it is one of the most affecting poems in the Golden Treasury. It disdains the "wealth of art," but it has all the force of artlessness.

The first three stanzas introduce the chief character, the third setting forth the theme and preparing the reader for what is to follow. With the fourth stanza we start directly into the story. The last two stanzas form the conclusion, stating the fact that Lucy is not really dead. The story itself is told only in part; the imagination has to supply the details.

Read simply. Occasionally the voice should take a sombre note to bring out some pathetic detail; but you should follow Wordsworth in his desire to let the sadness of the story go home by its own force, rather than by forcing it by rhetoric and elocution. It is really a very difficult poem to read well, for all it seems so easy.

227

In this lyric, as in many of Scott's, a story is suggested. The "ladie" sits weeping, looking across the sea. Her lover, Jock of Hazeldean, has been gone for some time. As she sits watching for his return, she is approached by the father of Frank, lord of Langleydale. He wishes her to marry Frank, but she remains true to Jock. Perhaps it is her own father that reproaches her in the second stanza, and Frank who pleads with her in the third; or perhaps it is Frank's father speaking to her throughout. At any rate, she at last gives in, and the wedding day is fixed. But on the night before the wedding Jock suddenly returns, and she flees with him over the border.

The poem is full of spirited music. The refrain lines are pretty and effective. Read to bring out the entire story and to express the music of the verse. Suggest the different speakers, making a decided pause after their words before speaking the refrain. A decided pause should also come after the third stanza. Bring out the surprise in the last stanza, especially in the last two lines.

229

The thought in this pretty lyric is slight, but the music is wonderfully sweet. The first stanza speaks of the natural echo; the second, of the echo of love; the third, explains this echo. Observe the onomatopoeic effect of the movement: the second line seems to echo the first; the last line echoes the third and fourth. Observe how beautiful these last lines are. Observe, too, the associations throughout. In the first line of the first stanza, you hear a similar sound in "answer" and "makes." The "m" of "makes" is echoed in "Music" in the second line. Observe the "a's" in the fourth line, and the alliteration of "l". The fifth line repeats the "a" in "answering" and the "l" in "light." Soft, musical consonants and vowels are used throughout the stanza.

In reading let your first thought be on the music. It should be soft and liquid, and it should suggest the echo-motive that is the basis of the poem. The climax should be at the end of the third line; from that one to the end of the stanza the voice should be fainter and fainter until it is barely audible.

232

It is difficult to find words to discuss this exquisite lyric. The only way to enjoy it to its full is to read it over and over, enjoying the beautiful, soft-tinted pic-

tures and the dreamy music. To Shelley, Night is not a personified abstraction, but a real person, with appropriate garment, appearance, and attributes, so that the pictures, though shadowy, may easily be discerned with the eye of the imagination.

Observe the frequent alliteration and assonance, sometimes so indistinct as to be scarcely audible, sometimes so plainly heard as to color an entire passage. Observe the use of "i" in "swiftly", first line; in "spirit", second line; in "misty", in the third; then down in the last lines of the stanza, so far away that the ear can scarcely catch the similarity of sound, the vowel is repeated in "which" and "swift." Take a more obvious example: In the first line the "l" of "swiftly" is repeated in "walk"; the "s" and "t" in "swiftly" is heard later in "western"; the "f" in "swiftly" is hinted at in the "v" in "over" and "wave"; the "w" of "swiftly" is heard again in "walk", "western", and "wave"; the "a" in "walk" is repeated in "wave", the assonance being the stronger because the words are both monosyllables. The poem is full of such complex musical effects.

Not less remarkable is the movement. The second and seventh lines have but two accents, the others four. The short lines are all full of meaning, and compel the voice to pause over them; and the phrase ends with the end of these short lines. The general movement, then, is of a long, majestic line, suddenly checked by a shorter one; then four long, full, rich lines coming to a climax of thought and movement in a short, strong line. It is wonderfully effective. The metre is irregular in that it is difficult to scan. But in its flexibility and variety, its sudden bursts of speed and heavy spondees, it is as

rhythmic, as gracefully flowing as almost any lyric in this book.

Read and re-read until you have visualized all the images, and until you have caught something of the haunting, mysterious charm of the pictures and music. Read, for the most part, slowly and deliberately, as if lingering over the musical sounds, and make your voice as soft and melodious as possible. Read to bring out the meaning and you will catch the rhythm—that is, do not force the accent. A particular foot or line may seem unrhythmic, but it is merely flowing so as to fill in every crevice of the meaning—so to speak. Read, and read, and read again: the poem is more beautiful after the hundredth reading.

236

This lyric is sung in “Marmion,” stanzas 10-11. The song is especially appropriate, as it is sung to a company of soldiers, whose fate it often is to die far from home and sweetheart. The first two stanzas deal with the grave of the true lover, the second two with the death and grave of the false lover. These last stanzas apply especially to Marmion, who has betrayed a girl who trusted him. The metre is unusual: the first and alternate lines contain each two dactyls; the second and alternate lines, a dactyl and a trochee. This metre is followed rather strictly, but it is such a wild, unnatural measure that it seems irregular. The metre is particularly effective in the third and fourth stanzas, where the theme and movement agree admirably. The last four lines of the third stanza seem to depart from the established metre, but really the movements simply march right on regardless of line-endings. The feminine

rhymes add a pretty musical note. The pictures are graphic.

eleu loro: evidently an exclamation of sorrow.

Read the first two stanzas softly and musically, and the last two stanzas as with vigor and boldness. Keep the rhythm flowing along in strict tempo, but depart from it whenever the sense seems to demand it.

237

“*La belle dame sans merci*” means the beautiful lady without pity, or the beautiful, heartless lady. Keats got the title from an old French poem, but his poem is entirely original. The story is vague and mysterious, and arouses certain questions to which no complete answer can be made. It is best, no doubt, to enjoy the charm of the suggestive, haunting story and not to pry too closely into the meaning. It has been said that perhaps Keats meant the lady to symbolize Poetry, or Beauty, and the knight to represent himself. Perhaps—but the poem is all the more beautiful if we accept the lady as some fair witch, some Lorelei, who takes delight in luring men to their destruction.

The first three stanzas reveal the situation by means of questions asked by the poet or by the knight of himself. The rest of the poem tells the story, the last stanza summing it up by answering definitely the question in the first stanza. Observe the exquisite musical effects throughout: the half-concealed alliteration and assonances, some of which extend over three or four lines. Observe, too, that the last line has but two feet, while the others have four. This last line is always strong and significant, and the sudden slowing up of the movement at this point gives a sort of sombre, solemn effect, a note of finality that fits the idea. Observe the sim-

plicity of the language throughout, and the rich pictures.

palely: an adverb coined by Keats—partly because he wanted to use the additional “l” and partly because it is much more suggestive than would be the adjective “pale” modifying “knight”. *with kisses four*: Keats explains this, in a jocular manner, in a letter. As he says, he could have said “score” as far as the rhyme was concerned. “I was obliged to choose an even number,” he says, “that both eyes might have fair play, and, to speak truly, I think two apiece quite enough”—all of which means, perhaps, that the poet wishes the knight to show that his love for the lady was tender and respectful, rather than passionate.

Read slowly, simply, and with a touch of solemnity. Linger over the musical phrases, as if reluctant to leave them. The words of the last line of each stanza are full and heavy, spondees are frequent, and the stanza comes to a climax; for these reasons the last line should be read in a measured, deliberate, sombre tone. This is another of the poems that grows more beautiful the more it is read. It has a charm that never vanishes.

239

This lyric of Shelley’s is easy to appreciate: its music and grace and suggestive figurative language make it beautiful. But some parts are obscure in details.

St. 3, *Love first leaves*, etc.: love leaves the stronger of the two hearts, the weaker one being left alone to endure the loss of what it once possessed. *the frailest*: the frailest thing, the heart. St. 4, *its*: the heart’s. *thee*: the person left desolate by the departure of love. *thine eagle home*, etc.: thy elevated home will, by decaying, leave thee naked to the laughter of the world.

The metre is unusual but musical; the first and alter-

nate lines contain two feet, the second and alternate lines contain three feet. The foot is either iambic or anapestic, no regularity being observed; but for all that the rhythm is graceful and flowing. It is particularly effective in the first stanza, where the shorter line is used for the subordinate idea, and the long line for the principal idea; and this general plan prevails throughout. The feminine rhymes add grace and melody.

The music is somewhat sad and plaintive. Bring out this note in your reading. Make the meaning as clear as possible, but especially stress the music. You will need to read several times before you catch the charm of the quaint melody.

240

Founded on a tradition. The unaffected yet restrained pathos, the simplicity of thought and language, and the pretty music make the poem a favorite. Observe that the first four lines give a sort of summary of the story: that the maiden could distinguish her lover while he was still a great way off, and that her love gave her an hour of happiness even though she was near death. The lover's failure to recognize his mistress, however, is unprepared for, and it is told so briefly and brusksly that it comes as a distinct shock.

Read with simplicity, sincerity, and sympathy. Bring out the pathos of the last stanza by earnest, yet unaffected reading.

243

A noble sonnet—Shakespearean in its richness of images and music, yet thoroughly like Keats in thought and mood. Keats knew that he possessed a weak constitution, but his ambition to be a great poet often made

him careless of his health. He died three years later at the age of twenty-five, so that the poem is almost a prophecy. Observe the wonderful phrases: "my teeming brain", "high-piléed books", "rich garner", "night's starred face", "high romance", etc. As you murmur over the lines, observe the rich, full music.

charact'ry: written or printed symbols. *high romance*: majestic stories suggested by the heavens. *to trace their shadows*, etc.: to write these stories with a hand directed by the happy accident of inspiration.

244

This sonnet is addressed to the poet's daughter, who had died many years before at the age of three. The poet feels a sudden joy, and, impatient as the wind, he turns to share his joy with his daughter, when he remembers that she is dead. He wonders how he could forget her for a moment, and says that his momentary forgetfulness of her is the deepest grief he has experienced except the grief he felt when she died. The sonnet sounds so sincere, so full of deep, poignant grief that we feel the poet is giving us a glance into his very heart.

Observe the sudden changes in thought, showing the poet's excited mood. Read earnestly and musically. Follow the rapid turns of thought, giving the impression of the quick succession of ideas. There is a solemnity in the last four lines, with their broad "o" of the rhyming vowels and the heaviness of the sounds throughout the lines. Read this part slowly and solemnly.

247

A very graceful, pretty poem, exquisitely phrased and exceedingly musical. It is, however, somewhat obscure in places, because the poet does not wish to use the names

for the feelings, since, as he hints, the names are often misused.

one word: love. *one feeling*: the pleasure in being loved. *one hope*, etc.: the hope of winning your love is so slight that prudence does not take the trouble to destroy it. *pity from thee*, etc.: the tender pity you give me in my disappointed love is dearer than love itself from some one else. *wilt thou accept not*, etc.: wilt thou not accept the worship that the heart raises.

The simplicity, the earnestness and tenderness, the grace, delicacy, and dignity of expression, and the beauty of the language—all combine to make this poem a true lyric. Read simply, earnestly, musically.

250

A spirited sea-song, or chantey. Its patriotic ardor, its simplicity and directness, its buoyancy, its stirring, spontaneous, rhythmic swing—put this among the choicest chanteys in literature. Observe that the first, third, fifth, seventh, and ninth lines are unrhymed, the absence of rhyme being compensated for by making the lines longer and stronger, by emphatic alliteration and assonance, and, in the seventh lines, by using internal rhyme and shortening the line. Observe the effective repetitions and the strong, musical refrain, the latter being slightly varied in the third stanza and much varied in the fourth.

Read with great energy and enthusiasm. Keep the rhythm regular. There is an occasional variation of the iambic measure, but the rhythm should march straight ahead.

251

This lyric is based on the famous naval battle of the Baltic Sea, off Copenhagen. The English, under Nelson,

came in from the open sea and attacked the Danes, who fought in ships and floating batteries along the landward side and were protected by land batteries. The English shattered the Danish fleet, but were unable to seize the vessels on account of the Danish land batteries. Nelson then sent a flag of truce ashore asking permission to take possession of the disabled ships, for the sake of the wounded sailors.

The metre is peculiar. The first line of each stanza has two accents, the next three have three accents each, the fifth has five, the next three have three each, and the last has one. The movement suggests the sudden onset, the fierce, rapid fighting, which culminates in the long line, then diminishes to the solitary cannon-shot in the last line. The feet are mingled iambuses and anapests. The general movement is rapid. The strong words used as rhymes and the succession of the same rhyme-sound in the sixth, seventh, and eighth stanzas is striking. All told, the sound is a wonderful echo of the meaning.

St. 1, *Prince*: the Crown Prince of Denmark. The first two stanzas concentrate the attention on the Danes. *hurricane eclipse*: the eclipse of the sun by a sudden hurricane. St. 7, *in light*: in the banquets held in honor of the battle. *Riou*: an English captain killed in the battle. St. 8, *mermaid*: everyone wishes that the poet had left the mermaid out of the poem. It strikes a note entirely out of tune.

Read throughout with great spirit, except the last part of the seventh stanza and all of the eighth, where the voice should be deep and solemn. Read rhythmically. Let your reading of each stanza suggest the swelling and sinking of the tumult of battle. The last line should be strong, full, and heavy. It is a strongly dramatic poem when well read.

252

This lyric is not only a great poem but a bit of sound philosophy as well. Stanza one gives a poetic description of duty. Stanzas two and three develop the thought that there are some persons that do not need to be guided and restrained by the sense of duty, as their hearts lead them to do what is right, that the world will be better when we can all rely upon the suggestions of love rather than the commands of Duty, and that even now we can obey the spirit of love, supplementing it with a sense of duty. Stanza four is personal: the poet, not having wished to subject himself to the limitations of his freedom, confesses that he has often deferred doing what he should in order to follow his own desires, but now he wishes to be guided more by Duty. Stanza five tells why the poet has changed his mind: it was no spiritual disturbance or remorse that changed him, but merely the longing for a steadfast guide, so that he would not be at the mercy of his changeable desires. Stanza six adds more description of Duty, the emphasis being placed upon the pleasant and important functions of Duty. The seventh stanza states that the poet wishes Duty to serve humbler functions than those mentioned in the preceding stanza: to give him the spirit of self-sacrifice and the steadfastness based on reason rather than the fickleness of chance desires.

St. 1, *Daughter of the Voice*: perhaps, the echo. When God's voice is heard, it starts echoes in the heart which suggest duty. St. 4, *untried*: inexperienced, untested. St. 5, *unchartered freedom*: freedom not limited by a definite statement of privileges and duties. St. 6, *flowers laugh before thee*, etc.: the flowers and stars owe their existence to their obedience to the laws of Duty, since the flowers return in their season and the stars

remain in their station by obedience to physical laws. St. 7, *the light of truth*, etc.: let me live in recognition of the great laws that control the universe, in the realization of the fact that everything must be subject to definite rules of behavior.

The poem is remarkable for the beautiful, suggestive language in which the abstract truths are clothed. Not often is bare ethics or philosophy robed in a garment of such beauty. Moreover, the language is musical: it has a majesty and dignity and grandeur that accords with the theme. Observe the assonance in many of the beautiful lines; observe the hexameter that ends the stanza, which adds a solemn, deliberate note of finality to the stanza.

In your reading, let your primary aim be to bring out the meaning. Study the language closely until you have seen the significance of every phrase, then try to make it all clear. Your reading should be slow, dignified, meditative, rich and sonorous.

259

Most battle-poems paint the glory of warfare; but this poem presents the awful aspect. The battle celebrated here was fought in the dead of winter. It began in the early morning, before day. The French defeated the Austrians with great slaughter.

Frank and Hun: French and Austrian. *Munich:* cavalry from Munich, capital of one of the Austrian states.

The dark, gloomy "atmosphere" of this lyric is remarkable. This is produced both by the pictures and the heavy, solemn, sullen sounds. The undertone is sad. There is none of the "glorious circumstance of war" in the poem. Observe the broad, rich rhyming sounds,

which are made more emphatic by the fact that the rhymes are in triplets. The last line of each stanza has the same rhyme sound, a very musical sound.

The reading should be somewhat slow, and very deep, sonorous, and solemn. Parts of the poem should suggest a funeral knell. It is easy to make the meaning clear: concentrate, then, on making the tones musically effective.

260

One of the most effective sermons against war ever preached. The children, with their usual inquisitiveness, ask most probing questions, which the old man can answer only with the catch-word, "It was a famous victory"—as if that settled the whole matter. It is, in a sense, a satire, in which the two children and the old man deliver an unconscious judgment on war and its horrors. The effectiveness of it all is increased by the naturalness and simplicity of thought and language.

The battle of Blenheim was fought by the Austrians under Prince Eugene and the English under the Duke of Marlborough, against the French. The former won after a hard-fought battle.

St. 7, *yon little stream*, etc.: close by yonder little stream, the Nebel.

Read simply and naturally. Remember that Old Kaspar is thoroughly sincere in all he says: do not try to make his language sarcastic. You can bring out the fundamental idea of the poem best by reading it directly and naïvely.

261

The title is taken from a Latin sentence that means "It is sweet to die for one's native land." The words are supposed to be spoken by Robert Emmett, an Irish patriot, who was executed for his part in an uprising.

He is supposed to be speaking to Ireland. The "foes" are the English.

The metre is graceful—too graceful for the theme. Read simply and musically, with all the sincerity possible.

264

The grace, pathos, simplicity, sincerity, and lyric melody of this famous poem are beyond praise. Observe that the language is not at all what we usually term "poetic"; indeed, in some places, it is colloquial. Observe also that there is no rhyme and no definite rhythm, yet it is a charming poem. To any one who knows Charles Lamb the poem is doubly beautiful, for it breathes Charles Lamb in every line.

The friend that the poet left "like an ingrate" was Charles Lloyd; the "friend of my bosom" was the poet Coleridge.

Read with the utmost simplicity and sincerity and pathos. Do not try to scan the lines: the poem is to read, not analyze. Read the refrain line, with its beautiful, haunting suggestiveness, softly, sadly, musically.

267

In this poem Wordsworth discovers a parallel between a flower and man. When the lesser celandine is young, it has the power of closing up against the cold and storms; but when it grows older, it loses this power and is unprotected. So with man. He is first the favorite of the spendthrift Youth, then is the dependant of the miser Age. Man would be happy if he could have in his old age some of the qualities and powers of youth.

and in my spleen, etc.: in my ill-humor I said that it was getting old and "gray"—like an old man.

Read to bring out the central idea: the difference be-

tween the youth and age of the flower, and the comparison of the flower with man. Read simply and rhythmically. Read the last stanza with earnestness.

270

The poet describes the beautiful Italian landscape at noon (stanzas one and two). He speaks of his deep dejection (last line of stanza two and all of stanza three); then tells how his dejection is softened by the mildness of the scene. It is a genuine transcript from Shelley's life: his love for nature's charms, his sensitiveness to all influences from nature, and his proneness to sudden fits of dejection, are characteristics of the poet. When one remembers that Shelley was drowned, the last stanza has a unique interest: it is almost a prophecy.

Is it within the power of words to paint a more beautiful landscape than this? The "atmosphere" of the poem is mild, calm, and balmy: the quiet beauty of the scene is felt by the reader as it was by the poet. Observe the soft, melodious combinations of sounds, the half-concealed alliteration and assonance, the rich, sonorous rhyme-words. Observe, too, the steady, quiet flow of the metre, which is varied only in the last line of each stanza to make a strong, full close to the thought and melody.

St. 1, *like many a voice*, etc.: the city's voice is soft like Solitude's, like many another voice that brings to the hearer the same delight: voices like the winds', etc. St. 2, *lightning*: the flashes of sunlight reflected from the surface of the ocean. St. 3, *the sage*: perhaps not referring to any particular wise man—at least, the description would apply to many.

Read slowly, quietly, meditatively, and, above all,

musically. Linger over the soft touches of melody. Some of the sentences are long: if you read them well, they suggest the slow, sustained breathing of the sea. Read the last line slowly and with all the vibrant richness your voice can command. The last line of the third stanza is irregular in accent: it should be read

To me' that cup' has been dealt' in an-oth'-er meas'-ure.
Stress "me'" strongly and make a decided pause after "dealt'", and, though you can *count* only five accents, you can *feel* six. Read simply: observe how simple the words and ideas are. Read rhythmically, but follow the natural phrasing rather than the monotonous pull of the rhythm.

272

An exquisite bit of humor and fancy, couched in a graceful, delicate verse.

Mermaid Tavern: an inn in London, where Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and other poets and wits were wont to gather. *browse*: "boose". *an astrologer's old quill*, etc.: an astrologer wrote down the explanation on a bit of parchment with his old pen. *new-old sign*: the sign of the Mermaid Tavern, which had blown away. It was old because long used on earth; and new, because just lately used in the Zodiac. If you will consult a dictionary, you will observe that the points of the zodiac are represented by certain figures. One of these is a maiden. Doubtless it was this sign that the astrologer thought to be the sign of the Mermaid, or sea-maiden.

The metre is the rapid-flowing trochaic tetrameter. Read brightly, lightly, rhythmically. Enjoy the spirit of fun, the gay fancy, and the graceful-tripping rhythm, and make your enjoyment felt.

274

The most remarkable feature of this lyric is the metre. It is dactyllic dimeter: only two feet to the line, those feet the difficult dactyls, and most of the rhymes dactyllic—that is, with two unaccented syllables after the accented syllable. An occasional variation from this serves to emphasize the prevailing movement. It is a very difficult and unusual metre. The poet has done extremely well with it, and has managed to convey, by the lightness and fragility of the form, some impression of the fragility of the life of the “Unfortunate.” It is questionable, however, whether the choppiness of the verse makes it a fit poetic form of the theme. The rhyme-plan and stanza-length are irregular, to suit the thought. The earnestness, sincerity, and delicacy, the thorough understanding and sympathy with the dead woman are fine and noble.

Read the poem until you feel the pathos of the situation and can clearly visualize the pictures. Then read aloud, tenderly, sympathetically, musically. The strict rhythm will tempt you to read too rapidly and trippingly: counteract this tendency by reading deliberately and lingeringly, as if to let the ideas sink home to the mind.

278

From “The Lady of the Lake.” It is the funeral song over the dead body of a Scottish chief, who died in middle age. The metre is anapestic, varied with iambs, and there is an extra syllable at the end of every line, making the rhymes feminine. Observe the numerous simple but suggestive figures of speech, all drawn from natural surroundings.

font: fountain, spring. *the hand of the reaper*, etc.: it is expected that death will take the aged; but men

weep over manhood snatched away in its prime. The same idea is expressed in the next four lines. *flushing*: full vigor.

There is something peculiarly wild and vigorous in this lyric. It is the funeral song of a half-barbarous chief: naturally, one would not expect to find the soft, gentle, mourning note of the refined. Read vigorously, rhythmically, yet sincerely and passionately, in the full realization of the feeling of the mourners.

279

The grace, delicacy, tenderness, the softness and sweetness of the music, the simple yet effective use of contrast—all this makes Hood's lyric a striking contrast to Scott's, though they are both on the same general theme.

Read simply, softly, tenderly, musically. The pictures are vivid: endeavor to see them clearly and express them clearly. Do not let a harsh sound mar the perfect beauty of melody.

281

A story told by means of hints. The first stanza is the poet's introduction. In the second, third, and fourth stanzas Rosabelle's friends are trying to persuade her not to attempt to cross the stormy inlet of the sea, not only because it is a dangerous crossing but because certain inauspicious omens have been heard and seen. In the fifth and sixth stanzas Rosabelle announces her intention of crossing. A ball is to be given at her home in Roslin castle, and her lover, Lindesay, is to be there—though Rosabelle protests that her desire to go home is not so much to see him as to please her father and mother. The remainder of the ballad tells the sequel: all that night a mysterious light blazes over Roslin

Castle and in Roslin Chapel, a light that always foretells a death in the family; and Rosabelle is drowned in the firth. That is the bare outline of the story, but it does not reveal the rich suggestiveness of detail, the half-told, half concealed situations and incidents. The demand made on the imagination is great; but the reward is great. Just sufficient is told to pique our imagination and set our minds constructing the whole story, and there the poet stops, allowing us to feel the pathos of the situation. Scott is a master at this kind of work, and this is one of his best poems in that respect.

St. 1, *ladies gay*: addressed to ladies, rather than to gentlemen because the story appeals to women. St. 3, *inch*: island. St. 4, *wet shroud*: foretelling death by drowning. St. 10, *pale*: enclosure. *foliage-bound*: ornamented with foliage, either bound on the pillars or cut into the pillar. St. 13 *candle, book, and knell*: referring to the ceremonies used at funerals.

Read until you have seen all the pictures in your mind's eye and have come under the spell of the story; then read simply, clearly, and musically. Bring out the story: suggest the speakers by your manner of reading; show the importance of such lines as "But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle," by your tone and the emphasis. The general undertone is solemnity and mystery. Make your voice as flexible as you can to bring out all the emotional and musical effects. It is a wonderful poem when well read: thrilling and dramatic, and restrained and artistic.

286

This poem, the next, and No. 290 are characteristic of the three poets. Wordsworth's "To the Skylark" is musical, sweet, temperate, and restrained, with less of ecstasy and lofty imagination; Shelley's "To a Sky-

lark" is gay, spontaneous, highly fanciful, full of "fine frenzy", adorned with poetic beauties; Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" is sustained, personal, replete with suggestive and unusual ideas and phrases, very imaginative. Wordsworth's calm, contented nature, Shelley's sensitive, emotional temperament, and Keats' aspiring, beauty-loving spirit are all suggested by these poems.

St. 1, *canst drop into at will*: it is said that the skylark can descend from a great height in a single dip and literally "drop into" her nest. St. 2, *twixt thee and thine*, etc.: the song is a never-failing bond because, though the bird is out of sight, the music can still be heard. St. 3, *privacy of glorious light*: a suggestive oxymoron. It suggests Emerson's phrase, "the tumultuous privacy of storm." The "privacy" here is the privacy of the bird when out of sight. *instinct more divine*: because of the idea stated in the following lines.

Read musically, clearly, simply. A certain mild happiness should be expressed in the tones and expression.

287

Read the poem through first to discover the broad divisions of the lyric. Perhaps Shelley did not write from an outline, but the stanzas fall into groups. St. 1 is an invocation to the bird; stanzas 2-6 are a general description of the bird and its song; stanzas 7-12 contain attempts to find an apt comparison to the skylark; stanzas 13-21 develop a comparison between the bird and man, with a more personal reference to the poet himself in the last stanza.

The metre is unusual. The first and third lines are trochaic trimeter, the second and fourth lines are the same except that they lack the unaccented syllable at the end of the line; the fifth line is iambic hexameter.

Irregularities are allowed throughout, for variety. The trochaic movement gives lightness and gayety, the feminine rhymes add a pretty musical touch, the long iambic line provides a full, impressive, and melodious close to the stanza. The "profuse strains of unpremeditated art" of the skylark are clearly suggested in the movement of the verse.

Shelley has lavished upon the poem a wealth of beauty—beauty of thought, of fancy, of phrase, of sound. These the student should discover and appreciate for himself.

St. 1, *profuse*: accent on both syllables. St. 3, *an unbodied joy*: a spirit just freed from the body. St. 5, *silver sphere*: the moon, or the star mentioned in preceding stanza. *narrows*: grows dim. St. 8, *in the light of thought*: as the skylark is hidden in the sunlight. St. 15, *fountains*: sources, inspiration. St. 16, *languor*: apparently, lack or loss of enthusiasm. St. 17, *deem*: think. "of death" modifies "things." St. 19, *if*: even if.

Alliteration and beautiful assonance characterize almost every stanza. Bright, clear, joyful music should be heard in the reading. Do not make the rhythm too strict: phrase according to the sense rather than the demands of strict scansion. Accelerate or retard the movement at any point to bring out the musical phrasing. The last line of each stanza should be rich, sustained, and expressive.

290

Surely the words of this poem come as near to the expression of an emotion, of a mood, as mere words can come. Keats, sensitive and impressionable, was moved more than most men by beauty; and, more than most

men, he had the power to express his feelings. As the song of the nightingale moved Keats, so his poem should move us: we should give ourselves up to the deep, sensuous, impassioned mood of the poet, and follow his emotion as called forth by the beauty of the bird's song and the thoughts of his own life.

We must not fail to remember that Keats is in thorough earnest in all he says. His life was, for the most part, full of gloom. He knew himself to be a great poet, yet his poetry was caustically criticized; he longed for strength and life that he might realize the fullness of his powers, yet he was always frail and knew that he could not live long; he was deeply in love, yet had no hope of every marrying. Moreover, his brother had recently died. The tender, delicate, sensitive spirit could not but sink occasionally into depths of dejection; his dejection, as here described, is natural and sincere, not a mere passing cloud. Yet his joy in the bird's song is just as deep and true. Beauty of any kind really put Keats in a sort of trance. Let us keep this in mind as we read.

In stanza 1 the effect of the bird's song is described as having the same effect upon the poet as an opiate. Stanzas 2-3 express a wish for some drink that will enable him to forget his sorrows and flee with the nightingale. In stanzas 4-5 the poet imagines he has fled with the bird on the "wings of poesy." Stanza 6 develops the thought that, since the poet has wished many times to die, he doubly desires it now, while the nightingale is pouring forth such music. Stanza 7 speaks of the immortality of the bird, as contrasted with the poet's mortality. In stanza 8 Keats is brought back to a realization of his own desolation, from which he has been enticed by the train of thoughts.

St. 1, *drains*: dregs. *Lethé-wards*: towards forgetfulness. St. 2, *Provençal song*: the music of Provence was gay and lively. *blushful*: blushing. *Hippocrene*: a fountain in Mount Helicon, the haunt of the Muses. Keats fancies that the water would look and taste like wine, so animating would it be. *mouth*: of the beaker, or goblet. St. 3, *new love pine at them*, etc.: (this world) where fickle love cannot pine at the loss of the beauty of his mistress more than one day, but seeks another mistress. St. 4, *not charioted by Bacchus and his pards*: not carried to you by wine-drinking. Bacchus was god of wine. He once drove a team of tigers round the world in his chariot. *save what from heaven*, etc.: except the faint light that comes in when the wind blows the leaves and branches aside. St. 5, *pastoral eglantine*: the eglantine was a rose often mentioned in pastoral poetry. St. 6, *for many a time*: because many a time. *to thy high requiem*, etc.: become as insensible as the ground to thy noble funeral song. St. 7, *thou*: in contrast to the poet. *clown*: peasant. *alien corn*: see "Ruth," chap. 2. *magic casements*, etc.: these words are full of suggestiveness, but perhaps no two persons get the same picture. Perhaps the image is of a lady imprisoned by an enchanter in a castle near a sea. She opens the window to hear the nightingale's song. St. 8, *the fancy cannot cheat so well*, etc.: I have been allowing myself to imagine that I have been caught up with the nightingale and have been thinking of Ruth and fairy-land; but now I find that imagination, though a deceitful spirit, cannot deceive me as completely as it is said to do.

The poem is full of beautiful pictures, rich fancy, melodious music. The soft, liquid sounds, the onomatopoeic effects, the assonances, the broad, open, clear-

ringing vowels—all this contributes to the wonderful music for which the poem is noted. The movement is slow, somewhat grave and stately. The metre and the rhyme-scheme are regular, and the lines are all of the same length except the eighth line, which has but three accents. This regularity of movement helps produce the quiet, meditative, dream-like impression. The short line near the end of the stanza produces a slight retardation of the movement just before the full, rich, swelling movement of the last two lines.

The key-tone of the lyric is gloom softened by the love of beauty. The voice should be low-pitched and vibrant; the reading should be slow and graceful, rich and musical. Put yourself in subjection to the mood of the poet and let your voice follow the changes and modulations of the mood. If you feel deeply, you will probably read well. Do not try to read too rhythmically. Read and re-read, letting your voice linger on the melodious lines and passages, and inhaling the full fragrance of this flower of poesy.

293

A picture, and a lesson. The picture is painted with vigor and vividness, and the lesson is drawn with admirable restraint. The contrast between Ozymandias' arrogant assurance of being remembered and our total ignorance and carelessness of who Ozymandias was, the contrast between the boastful inscription of the monument and the decay and desolation of the scene—is powerful, all the more powerful because Shelley merely states the facts and allows the reader to draw conclusions. Observe the specific, picturesque words. Observe the onomatopoeic effect of the last three lines.

the hand that mocked them, etc.: the hand of the

sculptor that copied the sneer, lip, and frown, and the heart of Ozymandias that nourished them. "hand" and "heart" are the object of "survive."

Read the first nine lines in a rather conversational tone, trying only to make the ideas clear and forceful. Read the inscription pompously, arrogantly. Make a pause after these words, then read the last three lines slowly, solemnly, musically, almost like a chant. Let the voice grow fainter toward the end until it becomes almost inaudible. Give the effect of the vastness of the desert and the pathos of the situation.

297

When Wordsworth was traveling through the Highlands of Scotland, he saw the Scotch girl here described and immortalized. He did not know her, of course; and never saw her again. But the scene and the picture of the maiden remained with him all his life, flashing at intervals upon his "inward eye." Wordsworth was very sensitive to such scenes as this—scenes in which nature and humanity mingle; so that he is able to feel and express an emotion far more keenly than most of us. The simplicity, both of idea and phrase; the quiet beauty of the sound and movement; the accurate and suggestive pictures; the wealth of pure, natural feeling—this makes the poem worth our reading and appreciation.

Observe that there are four sections, each of which ends with three lines rhyming, the other lines rhyming in couplets. Examine the sections for the outline, and read the lines closely for the admirably descriptive words.

Read quietly, yet sincerely and earnestly. The regular recurrence of the accent and rhyme should help produce the atmosphere of calm and tranquil pleasure; but

you should take heed that your reading be not monotonous. The sounds are soft and melodious: make your voice a true musical instrument.

300

Ariel is a spirit in Shakespeare's "Tempest," a servant to Prospero the magician. Prospero's daughter Miranda and Prince Ferdinand were going to Naples to be married, and Prospero commissioned Ariel to guard the ship that carried them. This is Shakespeare's idea. But Shelley carried the idea farther: Miranda has been re-incarnated from that time on, and Ariel is still guarding her. Now she lives in the person of Shelley's friend, Jane Williams. Shelley sends her a guitar, in which Ariel is imprisoned and from which he speaks to her. It is a pretty fancy—pretty in conception and fine and delicate in its details. Perhaps the germ of the idea is the facts that the front of this guitar was made of pine and that Ariel had been imprisoned in a cloven pine tree.

The poem is divided into two sections: the first developing the history of Ariel and Miranda; the second, the creation and nature of the guitar. Observe the light, delicate music of the octosyllabics, which exactly accords with the gay fancy. Observe the onomatopoeic effects throughout, especially in lines 65-75.

The poem will need close study in places, for the fancies are fine and close-inwrought. Get these difficulties out of the way before you attempt to read aloud. Read lightly and brightly. Remember that it is a spirit speaking: endeavor to give your rendering of the poem a delicate, ethereal, fairy-like tone. Read rhythmically and trippingly, enunciating clearly and musically. Follow the phrasing: do not end the ideas at the end of the lines unless the sense suggests it. Some one has said the

musical note of the poem resembles the tone of the guitar: see if you can hear that tone and suggest it in your reading.

302

A poem in the lighter vein. Wordsworth is sporting with his fancy, playing with similes. It reminds one of part of Shelley's "To a Skylark," though in that poem the series of similes is more dignified and elaborate. But Wordsworth's poem is not all lightness; every now and then, as in the last stanza, he displays his tenderness and sympathy with the flower. His attitude is much like that of one teasing a beloved child, calling it all sorts of pretty names in the exuberance of his fancy and affection. Observe the light, graceful, capricious metre. Observe the yielding, flexible feminine rhymes, falling upon the ear with a pleasant jingle.

St. 1, *types*: typifications, symbols.

In your reading show clearly that the poet and you are merely playing a pretty game. Read lightly, gayly. Here and there a note of pretended seriousness should be heard, as in the first part of stanza four. When the poet gives up his play-idea and shows his deeper emotion, follow him. The last two lines of stanza five and all of stanza six are sincere and earnest: make that manifest by your reading.

305

This poem is based on an incident of the Wordsworths' tour through the Highlands. The poet and his sister Dorothy had walked down the Tweed river to Clovenford. From here it was but a short walk to a ridge overlooking the Yarrow valley. Dorothy, ("my winsome marrow") wished to turn aside to Yarrow, but her brother over-persuaded her, perhaps with arguments

similar to these in the poem: that their time can be spent to better advantage in viewing other scenes, and that the picture they have in their minds of Yarrow is more beautiful than the real Yarrow could be.

The spirit in which the poem is conceived and executed is half-playful, half-serious. The movement is vigorous and rhythmic; the diction somewhat conversational; the images intentionally rather prosaic. The poet is assuming a half-contemptuous tone in order to persuade his sister to agree to his plans. Observe the playful, almost humorous effect of the feminine rhymes.

Be sure that you catch the spirit of the poem and the mood of the poet before you attempt to read aloud. Read lightly, brightly, gayly. Keep up the regular flow of the rhythm, and give a graceful, dancing swing to the verses.

307

Addressed to Jane Williams. The title suggests the leading thought of the poem: an invitation to Mrs. Williams to join the poet in a walk. The poem excels in vivid and vigorous description of the Italian winter and landscape. The movement is bright, the tones staccato.

The pools where winter rains, etc.: the pools filled with winter rains, the pools reflecting the leaves of the trees above. *stems that never kiss the sun*: because covered with the twining ivy and the "sapless green." *the daisy-star that never sets*: the daisy is called a star because of its shape, and it is spoken of as never setting because it blooms almost through the year. *yet join not scent to hue*: the early flowers have as yet no scent.

The spirit of the season, the mood of the poet, and the images and movement all suggest that the reading should be energetic, gay, sprightly, rhythmic. However,

the rhythm should be interrupted whenever following the strict rhythm would garble the meaning. Such interruptions are not blemishes: they give variety; they throw emphasis upon important words; they really make the swing more pronounced by calling attention to it through departing from it for the moment.

309

Written on the beach at Dover. The calm grandeur of nature made a powerful appeal to Wordsworth's serene personality. Notice that the first eight lines of the sonnet develop one thought: the tranquility of the scene; while the last six lines take up a related thought: the effect of the scene upon the poet's companion. Observe the many onomatopoeic effects, both of sound and movement. Observe the soft consonants and pretty vowels of the first two lines; observe how the idea of "breathless adoration" is intensified by the trochee at the beginning of line three and by the huddling together of the syllables of the first three words; observe the strong spondee in the last foot of the third line, which, by its very sound, emphasizes the idea; observe the liquids in the fourth line and the way in which the sounds and movement suggest the sinking of the sun; observe, in the eighth line, the suggestion of the insistent beating of the waves on the shore. The first eight lines are full of musical assonances.

thou liest in Abraham's bosom, etc.: THOU art blessed with divine favors all the time, so do not appear touched by such a scene as this; but WE are given such moments of joy but seldom. The person addressed is the poet's sister Dorothy.

Read quietly, meditatively, earnestly, musically. Try to express the undertone: quiet, serene joy; and try to

bring out the various onomatopoeic effects. Stand with the poet on the shore of the ocean and try to feel with him the benign power of the scene; then endeavor to give your emotion adequate utterance.

313

The most noteworthy features of this lyric are the onomatopoeic effects, the artful breaking of the rhythm by pauses, the delightful pictures, and the skilful phrasing. Observe the soft, murmuring sounds of the first quatrain and the melancholy note of the last line in the second quatrain. Notice the decided pause within lines two, four, and six.

stealth: the poet has been trying to win Sleep by stealth by thinking of sights and sounds that would induce sleep.

Read the first quatrain softly, musically, trying to suggest the drowsiness of the sounds. Begin the next quatrain in a simple, quiet, natural key; but in the last part suggest the notes of the small birds and the cuckoo. Read the last six lines with more earnestness. The last two lines should be a sincere exhortation.

316

Coleridge dreamed this poem. He had been reading an account of how Kubla Khan had erected a palace and laid out grounds. While the poet was asleep, he dreamed that he had composed two or three hundred lines—though it was not composing in the ordinary sense of the word, since “the images rose up before him as *things*, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort.” When he awoke, he wrote down, “instantly and eagerly” the first part of his dream-poem. He was

interrupted; and afterwards he found it impossible to recollect the remainder. The strange origin and composition of the poem doubtless account in part for its highly imaginative nature, the weird images, the dream-like fabric, and the irregular, spontaneous music.

English literature has few poems as magical as this one. From the very first line we are caught up into a strange, new country, beautiful but vague and shadowy; weird, uncanny suggestions agitate us; melodies, sweet yet solemn, fall upon our ears. Surely the way to enjoy the poem is to imitate Coleridge: as he composed not in words but in ideas, let us read by ideas, by images. There is a kind of poetry that requires close and constant study, and there is a kind that requires sympathetic insight, free yielding to the spell of the poet. "Kubla Khan" belongs to the latter class. Coleridge once spoke of "that willing suspension of disbelief which constitutes poetic faith." We need precisely that attitude in reading this lyric.

If any one cares to analyze the poem, he will discover some of the reasons for its charm. The frequent alliteration and assonance; the onomatopoeic effects of sound and movement. (Could any line be more musically suggestive than "Five miles meandering with a mazy motion"? Repeat the line a few times and see how it haunts you); the eerie images, the irregular metre, which coincides precisely with the shade of thought; the happily-found phrases—all this can be discovered and analyzed. But the charm of the poem defies analysis: it yields its highest pleasure to the one that permits himself to be caught up with the poet in his wonderful dream.

No specific suggestions can be given for the reading.

The poem should be read musically, of course; and it should be read expressively—slowly at times, rapidly at others; rhythmically, but with changes in movement whenever the phrase or thought demand it. The student should read the poem over and over; then if he has any power of expression, he will read well.

317

A poet here gives his conception of the nature and equipment of the poet. The thought of the first two quatrains is that the poet gets his ideas from within, through the "inner vision." He enjoys Nature, but having once looked upon a scene, he prefers to create a scene of his own or to meditate upon what has been suggested to him. The last six lines state that thoughtfulness, meditation, imagination, and love supply the equipment of the poet. If they are absent, there can be no poetry. The senses may perceive well or ill, may or may not bring to the poet hints and inspiration; if Thought and Love are endowments of the poet, the poet will be inspired. This is a poor paraphrase: Wordsworth has expressed the matter both clearly and beautifully; and once we perceive his thought, we should adopt his own language.

Read quietly, meditatively, earnestly. Bring out the thought clearly.

322

One hardly knows where to begin in analyzing this great lyric. Let us take first the main divisions of thought. The first stanza takes up the wind as a scatterer of the leaves and wind; the second stanza, as a driver of the clouds; the third, as a mover of the ocean storms. The fourth stanza begins the personal applica-

tion: "If I were a dead leaf or a cloud or a wave, or if I were even as hopeful and enthusiastic as I was when I was a boy, then I would not have to call upon you to listen to my prayer." The fifth stanza makes a figurative and personal application of the thought of the first stanza. The poet desires to be animated with the spirit of the west wind, that his thoughts may be driven like leaves over the earth to arouse the emotions of others.

Notice, next, the wealth of figurative language. The poem is a chain of figures. Scarcely is one finished when another succeeds, yet each one is appropriate and each one thought-provoking. In the first stanza, the wind is the *breath of Autumn's being*, the leaves *flee* before the wind *like ghosts from an enchanter*, the leaves are *hectic red*, *pestilence-stricken*, the wind is a *charioteer*, the seeds lie *like corpses*, the spring wind is the *sister* of the West Wind, the blowing of the spring wind is a *clarion*, the winter-bound earth is *dreaming*, the spring wind calling out the buds is *driving* the buds *like flocks to feed on air*. The poet thinks in figures. Observe the splendid figures in the last stanza. Indeed, this poem would have neither force, beauty, or truth, if it were divested of its figures of speech. And the rapid succession of figures assists in creating the impression of the impassioned mood of the poet.

The musical qualities of the lyric are as remarkable as the intellectual and emotional qualities. The full, rich, sustained music is one of the first characteristics. The metre is, normally, iambic pentameter, but hardly a line is regular. Trochees and spondees occur frequently. The iambuses are skilfully varied. The clauses often end within the line. Several feminine rhymes are used. The metre, then, is irregular—but artistically irregular.

It is rapid and vehement, or slow and solemn, as befits the thought in the particular line; the shifting of the accent throws emphasis upon strong words and allows onomatopoeic effects of movement. Through the whole poem there sounds a rich, full, sustained note, both splendid and melancholy. The poet has made the poem musical also by the sounds. Notice the frequent alliteration and delightful assonance. Study, for example, the third stanza: observe the liquids in the third line and others; the "s's" and "b's" in line four, and the "s's" and "a's" and "l's" in line five; the solemn "o's" in the last four lines of the stanza. It is wonderful music.

St. 2, *angels*: messengers. *are spread*: the subject is "the locks." L. 10, *which*: the antecedent is "dirge." St. 4, *only less free*, etc.: freer than anything else but you. *vision*: visionary, impossible. St. 5, *both*: both the forest and myself. *prophecy*: namely, that a better day is dawning, that the gloomy winter will be followed by the bright spring.

The lyric is sincere, impassioned, and personal. Let your reading reflect this. Passionate intensity should be manifest throughout, especially in the last two stanzas. Strive to make the meaning absolutely clear: some of the long, involved sentences will require close attention in this respect. You should show the outline of thought: do this emphasizing the different ideas as you take them up. Do not try to make the poem rhythmic: follow the thought, hastening or retarding the movement to fit the natural turn of thought. Endeavor to make both movement and sound form a sort of echo to the meaning. Dwell on the rich, beautiful lines and passages and listen to the musical undertone. This is one of the great poems of literature: the oftener you read it, the more

will you appreciate it and the more perfectly will you be able to express the thought, the feeling, and the music.

323

The poet gives us a clue to the interpretation of the poem. It was suggested by a picture of Peele Castle in a storm, the Castle being on a small island. Wordsworth states that he had lived for a month in sight of the Castle, but had seen it only in calm weather. If he had then painted the Castle, he would have made it a scene of quiet beauty. But now he is possessed by a different feeling. His brother John has recently been drowned in a storm at sea. The poet can not now paint a quiet sea, for the grief at his brother's death has colored his feeling for the sea. The poet then commends the picture for its spirit and fidelity to nature, then closes with the thought that the heart that does not suffer with human emotions is to be pitied, that one should not always expect to see the ocean in a calm or to live free from sorrow.

The simplicity, the sincerity, and the wonderful phrasal power are obvious. The poem has deep feeling and expresses very beautifully an eternal truth. A quiet, sweet music sounds throughout. There is little adornment or elaboration: the thought is stated with such consummate skill that it needs no rhetorical emphasis.

Read quietly, musically, sincerely, simply. See to it that your reading makes clear the thought upon which the feeling is based.

327

This sonnet, especially the first eight lines, has a Miltonic ring. The "royal Saint" who founded the college

was Henry VI. It was originally designed for only a "scanty band" of students called "scholars" and "fellows." They were, and are now, the "members of the foundation." They may wear white gowns at chapel services. Students that pay tuition are comparatively modern, and they are yet strictly distinguished from the scholars and fellows. They are not allowed to wear white.

The first eight lines develop the thought that we should not blame the founder and the architect for planning and executing such a splendid building for such a small band. We must give all we have to give: Heaven does not want us to measure our deeds by the rules of arithmetic. The last six lines give a description of the interior of the Chapel, the ceiling of which is very intricately fashioned.

with ill-matched aims: designs too pretentious for the purpose of the building. Supply "tax not" in this line. *sense:* the sensuous nature.

Read the first eight lines simply, but earnestly and energetically. Read the last six lines musically. The last line should be read *diminuendo*, the movement becoming slower and the voice softer until it almost dies away—like the music that forms the theme.

328

Whether Keats had seen or had not seen such an urn as he describes in this poem is not material. It is enough that he has here given us a beautiful description of an urn and some fancies and thoughts as beautiful as the object that inspired them. In quaint modern fancies and in thoroughly Greek love of beauty, the poem is unique.

of quietness: almost equivalent to "quiet," referring to the fact that the urn tells its story without words. The same idea is expressed in the next line, with the additional thought of the lapse of time since the urn was created. *Sylvan historian*: because it tells a sylvan story of life long past. *leaf-fringed legend*, etc., what story is hinted by the border of leaves around the figures on the urn? St. 2, *heard melodies are sweet*, etc.: music heard by the ear is not so sweet as that heard by the spirit. The music suggested by the figures of pipe-players on the urn is more melodious than real music. St. 3, *human passion far above*: far above human passion, which, etc. St. 4, *What are these coming*, etc.: the figures on the urn are here described, as in the first stanza, by questions. *thy streets for evermore will silent be*: because all the inhabitants are here on the urn and cannot return to their homes. St. 5, *dost tease us out of thought*, etc.: the attempt to express our feelings about the urn is as baffling, as teasing as to express our feelings about eternity.

In order to read the poem well, we must, of course, catch the spirit of the poet. No modern poet has felt more strongly or expressed more perfectly the spirit of ancient Greece than has Keats. Even their principle of art, that beauty is truth and truth is beauty, was one of his working principles. This poem, then, is perfectly sincere. The permanence of sound art and the transitoriness of human passions is also an article in Keats' creed, so is expressed strongly. Yet throughout the poem there is a brilliant lightness that helps create the impression of the intense joy the poet took in the work of his fellow-craftsman, the artist who created the urn. Read sincerely, then, but not heavily or gloomily. Read

with intensity. The poem is very musical—full of pleasant notes and with a natural, easy flow. The last stanza should be read with more earnestness.

329

The contrast between youth and age is a favorite theme with poets. The old man looking back upon his youth is inspired with tenderness for it and feels the pathos of the changes that have come with age—which emotion lends itself readily to poetic treatment. Coleridge was advanced in years when he wrote this lyric. The delicacy and grace and lightness of the verse intensify the pathos of the theme.

St. 1, *both were mine*: both Hope and the power to write poetry. Coleridge composed little poetry in his later years. *this body that does me grievous wrong*: Coleridge was in weak health most of his life. *trim skiffs*: steamers. St. 2, *I'll think it but a fond conceit*: I'll believe that the thought that youth is gone is but a foolish fancy. *masker*: masquerader. *slips*: strips, wisps. *tears take sunshine from thine eyes*: sorrow catches gladness from the brightness of your eyes. *Life is but Thought*, etc.: a poetical statement of the familiar dictum that a person is only as old as he feels. St. 3, *the tears of mournful eve*: tears are the gems of evening or old age, as dew-drops are the gems of morning, or youth. *tells the jest without the smile*: tells a supposedly humorous story without exciting any laughter—an unusually suggestive simile.

Read simply and naturally. The movement is graceful and rhythmic, but the reading should not be rapid and tripping. It is almost as if an old man were taking a pathetic idea lightly, adorning a sad thought with all

the graces and beauties of poetry. The reading should produce this impression. You have not read well if the music is not both sad and sweet.

330

Wordsworth's remarkable power to tell a story of common life with restraint and artistic simplicity is here well illustrated. As he and Matthew, the schoolmaster, are going out among the hills for a holiday one bright, beautiful summer morning, Matthew suddenly utters the words "The will of God be done." The poet naturally asks him why, when the day is so beautiful and they have so well started their tramp, he should voice such a sentiment. Then Matthew tells him of another morning, thirty years before, so much like this morning that the memory of it comes forcibly to his mind. On that former April morning he had been fishing. On his way he stopped at the cemetery where his daughter was buried; and as he stood by her grave, his love for her was stronger, it seemed, than it ever had been before. As he turned away, he met a girl, beautiful and happy. She made him think of his daughter and what she would have been; but in spite of the young stranger's beauty and grace, he did not wish her for his daughter—he wished for his own daughter alive again. Now on this morning, thirty years afterward, the memory of that morning comes to him and causes him to sigh and say "The will of God be done."

Wordsworth states that this story is not an absolute fact, but it is certainly a real human document, told with absolute fidelity to the laws of life. Read simply, directly, earnestly. Try merely to present the story as the poet has done—with simple dignity; you may be sure the pathos will go home of itself.

334

Full of deep, heartfelt emotion and sweet, minor music. The poet attributes to nature the emotions he himself feels—his own grief being so great that he imagines all nature mourns with him.

knells: that is, with thunder.

Read slowly, gravely, musically. The voice should naturally take a lower pitch and be vibrant and sombre. Read the poem aloud a few times until you feel the strange charm: the poem will haunt you with its music and emotion.

335

“Threnos” means a dirge. The poem is a lament for lost youth and the joys of youth. The lyric is so vague and general that it does not lend itself readily to close study. Perhaps the poet felt that vague dissatisfaction with the world that we all feel sometimes, and wished to give musical expression to the feeling without analyzing it. Observe that the first two lines and the last one of each stanza consist of but three accents, while the two internal lines have five accents—all but the third line of the second stanza, which has only four. The effect is of ascending to the summit of the thought, then wearily turning back with the beautiful, mournful refrain of “No more—Oh, never more!” Observe that only two vowels are used for the rhymes: long-“i” and “o”-before-“r”—both very musical sounds.

trembling at that, etc.: perhaps the figure is of an old man looking with fear upon a high precipice where he had stood in youth unafraid. c. l. Ecclesiastes: 12, 5, first clause. His thought is that the old man has lost his courage, his zest and enthusiasm, his hopes and confidence.

Read slowly and mournfully. The longer lines should

move more rapidly. The reading of the last line should be solemn, deep and low, the voice descending in pitch and decreasing in power to the very end. This poem, like the preceding, is pure music: read musically.

336

Brimming over with thought. The Trosachs are a mountain pass in Scotland, noted for their solemn majesty. The poet thinks that every nook within the Pass would call forth from an aged person thoughts and emotions of the transitoriness of life. He counsels those that drive such feelings away by art, to return to nature and nourish these feelings by gazing on the wonders and beauties of nature, which are permanent. Such a journey and experience would be thrice happy if one heard the robin sweeten the solemn thought with a song taught him by heaven. But any attempt to paraphrase the beautiful phraseology of the poem is defective: the reader must study the sonnet until he sees the meaning, then accept Wordsworth's language as the final and permanent expression of the idea.

Observe that the ideas of the first and second quatrain extend over into the following lines. Read by ideas, not by lines: the thought is clearer and the music finer. Read to make the thought clear, forcible, and musical. Every word in the sonnet is needed. Read slowly, then, and reflectively. Wordsworth's acquiescence in the laws of nature contrasts sharply with the discontent felt by other poets. The reading should bring out the resignation and submission of the poet, his philosophic contentment, and his love for nature.

338

One of the sublimest odes in the literature of the world. Once understood, it is one of the most signifi-

cant utterances of the poet Wordsworth and one of the most thought-evoking poems ever written. But it is difficult to understand—partly because the poet is dealing with a thought that is hard to phrase, hard to turn into poetic language, and partly because the poet is dealing with experiences which most of us have never had.

The poet begins his theme by stating that when he was a child the whole earth was clothed in heavenly light, but that now this light has faded. (Stanza I.) The rainbow, the rose, the moon, the waters are still beautiful; but a glory has passed from the earth. (Stanza II.) Now, while all nature is rejoicing on this happy spring day, the thought of what he has lost comes to him. But a “timely utterance”—namely, the thought of this poem—gives him relief. Now he is resolved that the happiness of nature shall no longer make him grieve for the lost joy of childhood. The poet then rejoices in the beauty and jollity of nature and children. (Stanza III.) The poet continues to express his satisfaction in the happiness around him; but a tree or a field brings back to him the remembrance of the ecstasy he felt when a child, and the poet asks himself where the former joy has gone. (Stanza IV.) Then he sets himself to answer his question, and he develops the main theme of the poem. The infant comes from another and a happier country when he is born into this world, and he comes “trailing clouds of glory” with him. This it is that accounts for the fact that “heaven lies about us in our infancy.” Shades of the prison-house, this life, begin to close around the growing boy, but he still beholds the light and knows whence it comes. The young man loses more of the vision but still perceives a part of it. The grown man sees it die away and merge “into the

light of common day.” (Stanza V.) Earth does her best to compensate the individual for the glories he has known in a previous existence. (Stanza VI.) Moreover, the child, through his instinct for imitation, soon learns to fit himself to this life, forgetting the world from which he has come. (Stanza VII.) The poet praises the child for his power to discern intuitively those truths which mature men and women toil all their lives to find, and grieves that the child should wish to become a man, since in that state his vision will be dimmed and his freedom fettered. (Stanza VIII.) The poet then passes to another phase of his theme. He rejoices that he has retained so much of the glory and brightness of his boyhood’s vision. The thought of his boyhood brings to him great joy—not for that which is perhaps most worthy, namely, delight and liberty, the simple faith of children, their hope, etc.; but rather for those instincts, those “shadowy recollections” of a former life. These shadowy recollections, whatever they may be, are nevertheless the foundation and inspiration of what is best in us during all our lives. In reflective moods the man can travel back to his childhood and feel again, in part at least, the emotions he felt as a child. (Stanza IX.) The poet, after tracing the changes in the individual, returns to his former theme. He wishes all nature to be gay; for though the radiance of childhood is gone, though nothing can bring back the time when all nature was apparelled in celestial light, yet he will not grieve but will find strength in what is left: in the youthful feeling of kinship with the universe, which, having once been, can never entirely disappear; in the resignation to human suffering; in the faith that looks through death to immortality beyond; in years that bring

the philosophic mind—in other words, the poet, though he has lost the intuitive faith of childhood, has attained the intellectual and spiritual faith of philosophy. (Stanza X.) The poet then professes his love for nature, saying that he has but relinquished one delight—that of unconscious, spontaneous love for nature—to live more completely under nature's influence. Moreover, the beauty of nature is more appealing now than formerly because he brings to his love a ripened appreciation; now, because of his human sympathy, the poorest flower can bring thoughts that were deeper than any he had when he was a child.

Note that Wordsworth does not profess to believe that the intuitions, the visions, those mysterious experiences of childhood are *proofs* of a previous existence and therefore of a future existence; he adduces them only as *intimations*, as *hints*. As he himself says, "It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith as more than an element in our instincts of immortality." Wordsworth was unusually sensitive in youth to the influences of nature. He seems to have felt the immanence of God more than most children do. He says further: "Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. * * * I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah and almost persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated in something of the same way to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times, while going to school have I grasped at a

wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. * * * To that dream-like vividness and splendour, which invests objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony." Now most of us either did not have those impressions, or did not have them so strong, or have forgotten them; and for this reason most of these "intimations" do not bring as definite thoughts. We can, however, trust the evidence of Wordsworth and others peculiarly sensitive in childhood, and we can accept their experience, as did Wordsworth, as an article of our "poetic faith", if not of our religious creed. And we can appreciate the splendid structure of poetry and philosophy which Wordsworth has raised upon this slender foundation. To condense abstractions to simple, definite statements was one of Wordsworth's talents, and to make those statements beautiful, poetic, memorable, was another. Many of the phrases in this ode have entered into the common speech of mankind and pass current as sterling symbols of thought.

The metre is irregular. The verse turns and winds according to the "lay of the ideas"—if the thought can be so expressed. The feet are, normally, iambic, but trochees and anapests are very frequent. There are occasional lines and passages that are abrupt, even prosaic, but they serve merely to set off the more majestic, rhythmic passages. To the irregularity of metre is due much of the music of the ode and much of the impression of passionate emotion and spontaneous, forcible utterance.

None but very general suggestions can be given for reading aloud. You should read and study the poem until the theme is mastered and all the details grasped;

then you should read to make the ideas and emotions clear, powerful, and attractive. Read by ideas. Follow the natural rhythm of the lines. Try to catch the poet's varying moods, and feel, after him, the emotions that the conceptions kindle in him. The poem deepens and widens in significance and beauty the more it is read.

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